





**ARTHUR RANSOME: DISPATCHES  
FROM RUSSIA, 1917-1924.**

**VOLUME IV.**

**1922-1924.**

**J.M.GALLANAR, EDITOR.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **ARTHUR RANSOME**

Perhaps better known for his *Swallows And Amazon* books written in the 1930's and 1940's, Arthur Ransome was a literary critic and a political journalist in his early years. Arriving in Russia in 1913, he became by 1915 a correspondent for the [London] *Daily News and Leader* initially reporting on Russia's role in World War I. He soon became absorbed in the Russian political scene and eventually the Russian Revolution and what followed. He reported to the *Daily News and Observer* and subsequently the *Manchester Guardian* and briefly the *New York Times*. In addition his reports appeared in the *New York Herald* and the *Baltimore Sun*. His dispatches also appeared in the [London] *Star*, the sister newspaper for the *Daily News*. His knowledge of Russian gave him direct access to the Bolshevik leadership. He remained in Russia except for brief trips to England. During much of the central part of this period he also spent much time in the border state as he followed the revolution and the movements for independence which flowed from the Bolshevik Revolution across Russia's borders. Ransome was the only Western journalist to follow these events through this entire period and is therefore a major resource for our knowledge of these events.

# **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**DEDICATION.**

**TO:**

**THE MEMORY OF MALCOLM C. GALLANAR.**

**1958-2015.**

**DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

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## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**I WISH TO THANK THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATION  
FOR ALL THEY HAVE HELPED ME ON THIS PROJECT.**

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**Ransome's journalistic reporting has been drawn from the following  
newspapers:**

**[London] Daily News.**

**[London] Observer.**

**Manchester Guardian.**

**New York Times [US]**

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**His articles sporadically appeared for very brief periods in the following newspapers.**

**New York Herald**

**Baltimore Sun**

**[London] Star.**

**The Star was the evening sister newspaper of the Daily News and carried the same articles. The American Papers used his articles from the Daily News.**

**One very important acknowledgement. Without Wayne Hammond's very excellent bibliography entitled ARTHUR RANSOME, A BIBLIOGRAPHY a work of this kind could not have been done.**

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#### **1. Newspaper Initials used.**

**DN. Daily News.**

**O. Observer.**

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**MG. Manchester Guardian.**

**NYT. New York Times.**

**2. In a very few cases Hammond's page reference is incorrect. This has been noted.**

**3. In some cases the dispatch or parts of it were blurred and unreadable as a result of the photograph process when copying the original from the microfilm process. This has been noted As unreadable (larger sections) or ??? (word).**

**TWO INTRODUCTIONS. Introductions I is a dispatch to the Manchester Guardian written by Ransome in 1927 after he returned to Russia following his assignments in Egypt and China. It reviews the developments in Russia over the ten years since the Bolshevik Revolution as seen by Ransome. Introduction II is a much more detailed background account of the events that Ransome discussed. It is for the reader who has only a general knowledge of this period. (See Vol. I)**



# **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

## **VOLUME IV.**

### **DISPATCHES FOR 1922.**

**MG. January 30, 1922.**

**The Ship And The Man.**

**[An article on sailing.]**

**MG. March 13, 1922.**

**What Russia Thinks Of Genoa: The Latest News From Moscow.  
Downing Street: "Where A Lonely Figure Gazes Into the Farthest Vistas  
Of Time."**

**[AR just returned to England from a visit to Moscow]**

**On the door of Tchitcherin's private office in Moscow is a large notice  
printed in ornamental characters that increase in size until the last word  
leaps from the cardboard like a shriek: –**

**It Is Forbidden  
To Everybody, Whosoever He May Be,  
To Speak  
With The Peoples Commissar  
On The Subject Of  
Genoa.**

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**When I saw it, I wondered how many other Foreign Ministers, and Prime Ministers too, feel like that, even if they do not decorate doors in Downing Street or on the Quai d'Orsay with placards so sincere and desperate. Desperate, of course, is Tchitcherin's placard, for in Russia, at least, to ignore Genoa is impossible, and the name of that lively seaport town was among the very first I've heard from his lips when I passed through that door after being forbidden to mention it myself.**

**Russia is taking Genoa seriously. That prohibition from bothering Tchitcherin on the subject is, of course, a proof that nobody is talking of anything else. It is impossible to get away from discussion of Genoa. I should think the placard saves Tchitcherin from at least 70% of his visitors. It does not mean that he and the rest of the delegation are not themselves working night and day to be ready for the conference. In the Russian Foreign Office a whole series of rooms are filled with people exclusively busied in preparing the Russian briefs. I found Joffe, the third member of the delegation, in rooms near Tchitcherin's, seated behind a mountain of purple typescript on thin, flimsy paper, such a mountain as a hardened publishers reader could hardly get through in a month. A secretary beside him was gallantly facing a similar mountain, and on a side – table were Himalayan ranges of the same kind. I was not surprised when Joffe said mildly, "Russia has nothing against a little delay; postponement for a week or two would give her a better chance of preparing her case."**

**Lenin.**

**Russia is taking Genoa seriously. When I was in Moscow a fortnight ago Lenin was still unwell, forbidden to work, though actually working because it was impossible to stop him, and it seemed extremely unlikely that he would himself go to Genoa. He was expecting to continue a kind of modified rest care for several weeks longer. But Lenin apart, the Russian Government is sending the strongest team it can put together. Both the Minister and the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, in Tchitcherin's and Litvinov, Krassin, with his London experience behind him, and Joffe, who is now almost a professional treaty – maker – they**

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**are sending the best men they have to a conference which they consider may have results no less important and more beneficial to Europe than those of the Conference at Versailles.**

**I did not see Lenin, on account of his illness, or Krassin, because he arrived in Russia on the day I left the country, but I had opportunities of talking with Tchitcherin, Litvinov , and Joffe, and gathered the definite impression that, while they were not prepared for any sort of capitulation, they were taking to Genoa enough goodwill, enough readiness to make concessions to give them a genuine belief that if there should be goodwill on the other side also it would be possible to come to useful agreement. I gathered also that their view of the reasons and character of the conference was quite markedly different from that of Western Europe.**

### **Diplomatic Isolation.**

**Russia is still isolated from Europe diplomatically. There are no tea-table talks between her representatives and those of other countries, no week-end meetings at Boulogne, no combinations of diplomacy and golf. What meetings there are have a doubtful, as if for illicit, character that distorts their significance, and Moscow is consequently inclined on the one hand to see hints where none were intended, and, on the other to get only half the data for a theorem or a line of argument which, in its isolation, it is ready to carry too far. Joffe, for example, newly back from Turkestan and Bokhara, only a week in Moscow, not yet sated with Genoa, not yet brought near the point at which he would put a placard on his door, talked with comparative freedom, and in so talking showed that London or Paris is separated from Moscow psychologically as well as physically by a wide gulf. He did not think that Russia was the main object of Genoa. "The real interest of the conference is that it will decide whether England or France is master of Europe." "If the Genoa Conference results in a break," he said, "it will be a break not with Russia, but between English, French, and, German policies." I asked him what he saw in German policy. He said: "There are two. There is the policy of Stinnes, who wishes to work with England and there is the policy of Rathenau, whose inclination is to work with France." This idea**

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**I found was more or less general, and upon it has been erected an interesting theory of the origin of the conference. This theory is that Lloyd George, having long been gulled by the difficulties of working with a headstrong France, has been looking for a point at which he could safely diverge from her. He cannot, for political reasons at home, take Germany as a question on which to agree to differ with France. On the other hand, he can take Russia. Hence Genoa.**

**Even leaving out of account the errors that are due to the isolation Moscow from Europe, there can seldom have been a conference to which the parties brought more fundamental misconceptions of each other's positions. Both sides have mistaken the range. The one party sets its sights for too short a range, the other for too long, and there will have to be considerable readjustments before they can really get into touch with each other. It is as if they were looking at each other through opposite ends of the telescope. One side is inclined to see Russia as dependent on Europe. The other sees Europe as dependent on Russia. It is the question of time that sets them so far apart, for it is only in the long run that both propositions are true. In Europe people seem to think that the Russians will come to the conference obsessed by their immediate difficulties. The Russians, on the other hand, trained as revolutionaries in a school which concentrated its attention on the working out of long economic processes, cannot disabuse themselves of the illusion that other people are similarly inclined to ignore immediate bushes while considering distant woods.**

**Mr. Lloyd George.**

**Most interesting in this connection is their conception of Mr. Lloyd George, who alone of Western statesmen, they consider understands the issues involved. A week or two ago Tchitcherin gave an interview to foreign correspondents and terribly embarrassed some of them who had expected a revolutionary speech by devoting at least half the allotted time to a panegyric on the English Premier. Mr. Lloyd George has no greater admirer than those who sit in the Kremlin in Moscow. But they translate his ingenuity in politics into a wider field and are inclined to believe, when they cannot make out what he is at, that he has hitched**

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his wagon to some star which is not yet risen above the Moscow horizon. Downing Street for them is a lofty watch – tower or a lonely figure, with white hair ruffled by the eternal winds, sits and gazes with inhuman intensity and cutting into the farthest vistas of time. This conception of Mr. Lloyd George dominates their understanding of English policy. They consequently grossly overestimated English consciousness of the desirability of Russian trade.

With regard to the duration of the conference, the Russians take a very different view from that current in England. They spoke of six months, and I even heard it suggested that it might develop into a more or less permanent economic council. "There will be a solemn conference where everybody will talk for the benefit of the newspapers. That may last 10 days, a fortnight, or a month, after which the principal performers will return to play their parts on other stages and the real business of the conference will begin." "And how long do you think that will last?" I asked, and get the reply, "The Versailles Conference lasted a long time, but it did not last long enough to produce a result with which people are satisfied."

**MG. March 21, 1922.**

**Moscow Under Tsar Nep.  
The New Bourgeoisie.  
Liberty, Luxuries, And Lunatic Prices.  
A Million Roubles For A Cab Drive.**

**[AR returned to Britain from a visit to Moscow.]**

"Under Czar Nep everything is allowed." That was the exultant phrase I overheard in a conversation on the Kuznetsky. Most (formerly the most famous shopping street in Moscow) between two obvious specimens of the "new bourgeoisie." Czar N.E.P., the current abbreviation for *Noraya Ekonomitcheskaya Politika*, or New Economic Policy. N.E.P. is a good abbreviation, and wags will sometimes translate it for you as Ne

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**Economitcheskaya Politika, or Non--Economic Policy, or Neisvestnaya Econonitcheskaya Politika, or Unknown Economic Policy. No one quite knows what Nep is, not even its promoters sitting up there in the Kremlin, and themselves a little surprised by its certainly astonishing results. But the main point of Nep is seized in the sentence I have quoted, "Under Czar Nep everything is allowed."**

**Under his rule, at any rate, has arisen a new Moscow, in a way something of a monstrosity when one thinks of the conditions in the inexorably spreading areas of famine a few hundred miles away, and certainly an extraordinary contrast to the old Moscow and the Communist experiment, with boarded shop windows and rare Soviet shops, some of which were empty and most of which were closed. Nowadays closed shops are comparatively rare. Elisseier's famous sweetshop has windows stacked with chocolates and cakes. There are any quantity of fashionable boots and ladies hats. In the costume shop windows may be seen 1922 numbers of Parisian fashion papers. On the windows of the shops are pasted exultant notices: "No tickets required; free sale to all citizens" – that is, of course, to all citizens whose pockets contain the requisite millions. Huge banners waving across the street proclaim in this one – time Communist city a vast lottery with four malliards in prices. The salary of a fairly highly paid State official is 3 million monthly. Cafés are open all over the town, with music, and even the time-honored gypsies have reappeared with their bright clothes and unpleasing voices. In the windows of the cafés were huge notices promising pancakes during Shrovetide. In the flower shops were fine clusters of ranunculus growing in elaborately decorated baskets. Characteristic of the new era, I think, were the immense number of notices offering lessons in music, dancing, acting, and the ballet. Characteristic of the transitional stage from the Communist experiment were the number of shops which described themselves as "Labor Artels" (associations of workers sharing labor and responsibility) and as home industries, or announcing in large letters that all was the personal work of the vendors.**

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### **The Toyshops and Food shops.**

**The most satisfactory innovation, from my point of view, was the free opening of the old peasant toy shops which were the pride of old Moscow. Latterly, the chief of the old shops had been renamed a museum, and while it was possible now and again to look at a few dusty specimens it was impossible to buy any. Today you can walk in and walk out with your carved beasts and dolls and ashtrays as you could five years ago. The quality of the workmanship has fallen off. Too many of the carvers have been killed in the wars. But there are still delightful things to be had. I bought a little wooden model of a Red Army soldier for 20,000 roubles from a lady who seem to think it a little improper to take such a thing to England, but was confident when I bought a Russian boyarin of the time of Ivan, and the whole family of children in smocks and sarafans to keep him in order. I owe to Czar Nep the fact that I was able to buy them at all. Czar Nep also winks the other eye at the cigarette lighters, which are the product of a quite new industry which has grown up since the Revolution, and in which Russia has no rivals. They are beautifully made, with lavish expenditure of material, strong, solid, cased in bone or vulcanite, made of brass, with all kinds of ingenuity's for keeping a supply of fresh flames. They are beautifully made – in time stolen from the State. They are lavish in their use of good material – stolen from the State and intended for airplane parts or engine repairs. Everything in them – time, material, and labor – has been stolen from the State and turned to private profit. Even in the book shops Czar Nep's hand is to be seen. It is shop where once could be bought nothing but the works of Karl Marx and his disciples, I was offered a new and well-printed translation of Omar Khayyam.**

**The shops, I say, are full. Many of them are full of rubbish. But, at first sight, the thing that must astonish the stranger in Moscow is that the food shops are full. Passing from window to window I have seen whole sturgeons, great jars of caviar, monstrous cheeses, even oranges, obtained probably through the obliging diplomats of some small nation. (I have heard it said that our own Commercial Mission in Moscow is the only one that does not use its privileges for private money making.) In old days the food shops used to have cheeses in the window, but they**

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were wooden cheeses. It was a waste of good cheese to expose it in such a way. Now the cheeses are real. And the reason brings us to the very center of one of the problems which Czar Nep is posed with. Money in Moscow decreases in value every hour. Consequently the small trader, the moment he sells something dare not put his money in the till. Tomorrow he will be able to buy less with it. Not wasting a moment, he rushes off and buys something else. At all cost he must keep his whole capital in the form of goods and not in the form of money. He buys something. His million passes on to someone else, who in his turn claps his fur hat on his head, and, he too, flies to make a purchase before the fairy money notes in his hands. In fact I wonder sometimes that the paper money of Moscow does not catch fire, so swiftly as it passes from hand to hand. Czar Nep allows everything, but with ceaseless whips he keeps his devotees on the move. Turnover, turnover – that is everything and the millions whirl round and round like Tibetan prayer mills devoted to a deity insatiable of active worship. It is perhaps for this reason that the "new bourgeoisie" are physically quite unlike the old. The old were known for their fastness. The new are lean and athletic in their perpetual hurry to turn paper money into goods.

### **A Chat with a Sledge-Driver.**

Even if there were none of the other abundant proofs of the existence of the new bourgeoisie it would be possible to deduce it from the enormous increase in the number of the isrostchiks plying for hire with their sledges. In the extreme period of the Communist experiment it was a matter of great difficulty to find a sledge. I have often tramped miles across Moscow, with plenty of money in my pocket, but unable to find a sledge. Now they are to be found at every street corner. Even the likhatchi (very much more elegant variety of sledge with a fast trotting horse and a driver with the profound conviction that the rest of the populace exist only to look at him or to get out of his way) have returned, together with other luxuries; but whereas you can go a respectable distance in one of the ordinary sledges for a paltry hundred thousand the gentleman of the hackney trade will not stir for less than a lemon (a million). Moreover, the cabmen have almost ceased to grumble, and I came home one night with one so cheerful that I felt to make him more

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**cheerful still by giving him a box of Riga matches when he asked me for a light. First he was pleased with the weather, which was indeed mild, and then with the fact that the clock hand had been put on an hour, as, like the weather, it was a sign that spring would soon be here. I asked him if he would be going back to his village when the snow melted, but he told me no; his reasons for looking forward to the spring were practical, not sentimental. He was a permanent Moscowite, one of those who apply for hire in Moscow all the year round, and do not, like a great many, drive sledges in town in the winter and go home to their villages for the summer. He said that with the new conditions there had been such an influx of sledge-drivers from the country that competition was too strong and prices not what they might be. With the spring the bulk of them would return to the villages, and then, he thought, things would be much easier for people like himself, who would remain. "You, mister, will have to pay three roubles instead of two (300,000 instead of 200,000), and that will be nothing to you, but it will just make all the difference to us." He said that, what with the price of hay, food, and other things, he had to earn 800,000 roubles a day, and he thought that a very good day on which he made a lemon (million). He himself remarked on the number of electric lights burning in the houses and shops (some shop windows are even illuminated in the evenings with little electric fans going to clear the frost from the glass) and compared this new brilliance with the depressing darkness of former years.**

**I asked him when, in his opinion, had been the worst time, and he replied, "Oh a year or two ago, after the Revolution." He quite evidently regarded the Revolution as something over and done with, an historical event. "In those days," he said, "prices were not what they are now, but if you had only a little money it often happened that you could search all Moscow and not be able to buy anything at all. Now, of course, prices are lunatic, but if you have any money you could buy something with it. And, after all," he added philosophically, "the prices make very little difference to me. If prices are in lemons, then my fares will be in lemons to, and what is it to be to be spending other people's money?" Of course, it should be remembered that the isrostchiks serve as a barometer of the prosperity not of the working class but of the bourgeoisie. A bourgeoisie with money to fling about means that isrostchiks have plenty of passengers.**

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### **Saving Money Not Thrift.**

**The more prosperous subjects of the Czar Nep do indeed throw their money about, if only because, in Russia, the worst sort of thrift is to save. Soviet roubles are fairy gold. He who keeps them for a rainy day finds that they have turned into dead leaves in his hands. The Government recognizes well enough that something must be done, if only to lessen the number of noughts involved in even the most modest bookkeeping. In changing English money for roubles I got several half – million notes on which were printed not 500,000 roubles but 50, with a little note on the back to explain that every rouble of the 1922 issue was worth 10,000 of any previous issue. But this devaluation has already been far exceeded by the cab men, who count in roubles each of which is worth 100,000. I have also seen a fine silver rouble minted in Petrograd, real money and handsome money at that, though its issue is at the moment impracticable, because at whatever official rate it were sold it would be bought up at a higher rate in the markets by people who would instantly hide it away.**

**Another method in fairly general use is calculation in gold roubles. The Government charges foreigners in gold roubles for lodging and railway journeys and telegrams. The gold roubles are translated into Soviet roubles at a rate fixed by the Government, and these into foreign currency at the (official) rate of the day. The official rate rises steadily, but never keeps pace with the actual rate at which people buy and sell. When I was in Moscow the official rate for one English pound was 2,250,000 whereas I changed on arrival at the 3 million, and before I left heard of pounds being changed at 3,900,000. By now the rate will be over 4 million to the pound. The rate varies in the most curious way, sometimes actually taking a turn for the better from the Russian point of view. This, I am told, depends upon whether or not the Cooperatives are buying foreign currency.**

**Under Czar Nep, society is crystallizing again after the plum-pudding stir – up of the Revolution. The spectacle is not edifying. A sort of small aristocracy or samurai class consists of a handful of honest**

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revolutionary enthusiasts who tried to live on their salaries. But sooner or later these must be swamped in the mass of the new milliardaires. The new bourgeoisie, which has not even the traditions of the old, is without culture of any kind, without moral restraints, recognize no obligations, greedily rakes his money together and grossly spends it, pursuing the coarsest material pleasures with shameless abandon in the midst of the general poverty. There is, however, a sort of vitality in this new blossoming of commercial activities, and perhaps some hope for the future. A young Communist to whom I talked while waiting in one of the offices gravely rebuked me when, in answer to a question, I had expressed disgust at what I had seen of the Czar Nep's more exultant devotees, and said, "Their gestures are extravagant and ungainly because they have been unable to move for five years. They are naturally yawning and stretching themselves." He further said, "You are wrong in thinking that the phenomenon is without seeds of health. It is my business to go through the proposals for new private enterprises, and I can tell you that whereas at first the proposals were almost exclusively for food shops, for antique shops, cosmetic shops, and shops when old secreted stocks could be sold, now every week a larger percentage of the proposals are of a kind that means the making, the production of something. There is promise in that."

### **The New Bourgeoisie and the Bolsheviks.**

It may be asked, What is left of the revolution? Industrial conscription has gone and unemployment has returned. So far from continuing the nationalization of factories, the State is getting rid of the responsibility of one factory after another as fast as it can. Even the houses are being handed over to the house committees, who will gradually establish a claim to actual property in them by carrying out repairs. On the face of it, it would seem that everything has gone back to the old state of affairs. That is not so. Something has happened, even if it is only that there is a new bourgeoisie rapidly becoming clearer and clearer in its understanding of the fact that it has everything to lose by any return of the émigrés. So far this new bourgeoisie has no very real quarrel with the existing Government. It is not yet strong enough to trade abroad on any large scale. When the time comes for that it will come into conflict

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with the Government over State control of foreign trade. The Vneshtara (Department for Overseas Trade) will be felt to be in the way. When the moment comes when he cannot refrain from touching it any longer, Czar Nep will stretch out a hand and Vneshtorg will either vanish or turn with enthusiasm into a sort of consular service, explaining, no doubt, that this had always been its ambition. For no one has begun to understand the psychology of the Revolution who has not perceived that the Bolsheviks are not the courtiers of King Canute, who asked their master to turn back the tide. Their aim is not to resist but to understand inevitable processes, not to stay the storm but to ride with it, and to go with complete consciousness whither the storm goes. The storm has brought them to Czar Nep. Very good. They will not pretend that there was not a moment when they hoped to be brought to something better, but, Czar Nep being inevitable, they are quite prepared to deck his shapeless bulky person with decrees.

**MG. March 30, 1922**

**Russians And Genoa.  
Assassination Feared.  
Housed 30 Miles From Conference.  
Interview With Delegates.**

**Riga, Wednesday.**

**The Russian delegates to the Genoa Conference arrived this morning and held their first meeting with the representatives of the border States in the search for agreement on common interest. There will be a second and probably final meeting tomorrow.**

**In the afternoon I talked with Chicherin, who expressed himself much disturbed by the attitude of the Italian Government.**

**"The Italian Government," he said, "have arranged for us to live not to at Genoa but at Rappallo , 30 miles away, the only communication with**

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**Genoa being a road specially adapted for assassinations. In view of the threats already made by Savinkov and the monarchist it may be impossible for us to go to Genoa if we have daily to run a 30 mile gauntlet in motorcars. The Italian Government has not answered three several notes of protest set by our representative, Vorovsky."**

**I asked why Lenin was not with the delegation, though on the official list.**

**Chicherin replied: "Lenin is feeling ill and is unlikely to leave Russia yet, though if his presence at Genoa should seem essential it is not impossible he may yet go."**

**With regard to Lenin's views, he showed me the typescript of notes of Lenin's speech on March 27, at the 11th Communist Congress, from which it appears Lenin said: "We go to Genoa not as Communist, but as merchants seeking to widen our trade and obtain for it favorable conditions." Lenin also said that Russia would attain its objects either at Genoa or regardless of Genoa. With regard to the rumors of disagreements inside the Communist party, Lenin said: "At the present moment there are no disagreements of any sort. The émigrés have remembered now what the Left Communist themselves have already forgotten."**

**Litvinov Questioned.**

**Afterwards I saw Litvinov, who, answering the question on the Cannes conditions, said he was uncertain what they were. "The text given by the Italian Government," he remarked, "does not correspond with that published in 'Europe Nouvelle' and the 'Petit Parisien,' or, I think, with a copy given to Krassin in London. The differences are fundamental."**

**With regard to the success of the Conference Litvinov said: "It will be an important step in the reconstruction of Europe as a whole if the participants occupy themselves with the future and not with the past. There is no hope of reconstruction without the economic resurrection of**

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**Russia, and we naïvely think that helping Russia does not mean throwing new burdens upon her."**

**"Shall I use the word 'naïvely'?" I asked him. "I do not mind," he replied. Litvinov went on to say that certain accounts of the meetings of the experts published in the French press were not encouraging for the success of the Conference, since they seem to show that people are still trying to settle the affairs of Russia without consulting the master of the house. He corroborated Lenin's speech, quoted above, by saying: "We are not going to Genoa to advocate Communist principles, and shall make no proposals incompatible with the order of things existing in Western Europe. We shall, however, support any progressive proposals tending to eliminate war and to reduce armaments. We, however, are not the initiators of Genoa, and therefore not makers of the agenda."**

**Asked about the possible political consequences of Genoa, Litvinov made a remark which shows that Russia has taken up a position very different from that formerly occupied when she asked for a formal peace treaty with England. "Peace treaty is not necessary since there has been no formal war. All that is necessary is the restoration of normal relations."**

**MG April 27, 1922.**

**Moscow & The London Experts Report.  
A Hardening Attitude.**

**Riga, Wednesday.**

**A marked hardening in the attitude of Moscow as reflected in the Russian newspapers is noticeable after the publication of the London report of experts and the Allied reception of the Russian – German Treaty. The "Izvestia" has invited opinions from various celebrities known under the old regime including General Brusiloff who, remarking on the French attempt to invite the old Georgian Government to Genoa**

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**asks whether they are going to invite representatives of all the Governments recognized by them from time to time on the borders of Russia.**

**The old commander-in-chief is particularly bitter against Wrangel, "who played an anti-national role in the summer of 1920, drawing against himself forces which could have been sent to the Polish front. Thereby he showed himself not only an enemy of the revolution but also an enemy of the Russian people, sacrificing the interest of the Fatherland for the sake of personal ambition."**

**Brusiloff Ends His Letter: –**

**When I see the position our delegation has taken up at Genoa my heart, not that of a Bolshevik but of a man who loves his country, throbs with pride, for I see how more and more people begin to reckon with the new Russia born in revolution.**

**Hodasevitch, a barrister, sees in the London report an "unmasked definite desire to force the great Russian State, and with it the Russian people, into the situation of China during the time when anyone was master there who chose to take the trouble."**

**General Slashtcheff writes: –**

**The suggestions of the London conference of experts is an attempt on the sovereignty of Soviet Russia, and there can be no sort of talk of its acceptability. These conditions should be decisively refused.**

**Slashtcheff, like Brusiloff, attacks the Russian White leaders, who as traitors to their nation, "are employed for definite ends at definite wages, giving up any kind of ideals." He reminds his readers of the continued existence of Wrangel's army.**

**Professor Worms takes a more moderate position, and thinks some sort of compromise possible, pointing out that many points of the report are**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**already realized in agreements with separate countries, and concludes:**

**–**

**In general I must recognize that if no compromises is found now, then undoubtedly in the near future Western Europe, under the influence of its difficult economic condition, will have to return to these conditions and find a solution in compromise, in spite perhaps of the desires of individual leaders of political life in Western Europe. Economics have always been above the demands and desires of individuals.**

**There is little to add to these opinions from the leading articles in Russian newspapers, which are uniform in tone and insist that an attempt is being made to interfere with Russian internal affairs and to fasten on Russia a regime of capitulations "turning foreigners," as the "Izvestia " says, "into some sort of special privileged caste not subject to Russian laws and not responsible even in cases of definite infringement of the order of things established by law." The "Izvestia" continues: –**

**Russia does not intend to "capitulate" in any degree or any connection. She unanimously denies the principles which lie at the base of the report of the London experts, which in the view of the whole Soviet Republic is an excellent insolent attempt not only on the well – being but also on the sovereignty of the Russian people, and encroachment not only on its life but also on its honor.**

**Another article says the Russian – German Treaty illustrates the only practical way out. Resolutions of protest demanding firm attitude in the delegation have been passed at Moscow and also by other Soviets and military units.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. May 4, 1922.**

**Russian Opinion.**

**Riga, Wednesday.**

**The "Izvestia" attributes significance to the attitude of the neutral nations towards French hostility to the Conference. "That they will have to orientate themselves on Mr. Lloyd George instead of M. Poincare is sufficiently probable. But we do not yet know if the moment for such a change has arrived. That in the highest degree depends on the behavior of Mr. Lloyd George."**

**The journal proceeds to observe that on a previous occasion England protested, but finally acted hand-in-hand with France. "This solidarity especially manifest in the throttling of Russia and Germany."**

**The "Pravda" says Poincare is right in thinking that the Russo-German Treaty alters the equilibrium of Europe "the equilibrium hitherto was the equilibrium of a gun at full cock. Now the safety catch has been put in." And further – "all real results of the Conference so far are summed up in the Russo-German Treaty which was concluded apart from and against the wishes of the initiators. In this there is a warning both to Lloyd George and Poincare. Their equilibrium was shaken the moment it became clear that they could not exist without the Conference. But if they are going on marking time in one place, trying to preserve their former positions, the only result will be that a new equilibrium will be established apart from them, and that the Russo-German Treaty will be merely the first swallow, which will be followed by others."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. June 5, 1922.**

**A Deep Split In The Russian Church.  
The Patriarch Tikhon And The Bolsheviks.**

**Riga, May 26.**

**The Russian Church is at this moment going through a hierarchic crisis which may well have an extraordinary effect upon its religious as well as upon its political significance. The abdication of the Patriarch Tikhon is comparable with the abdication of the Czar, and the circumstances of that abdication suggest that the Bolsheviks, without the slightest desire on their part to be "Defenders of the Faith," rather the contrary, in fact, are likely to occupy a place in the history of the Russian Church similar to that held by the Tudors in the history of our own. It is possible that quite unconsciously and indirectly they are bringing about the Reformation of the Russian Church, and by emphasizing the distinction between temporal and spiritual power are clearing the way for a religious fervor which will accompany an hierarchic decadence.**

**The crisis, as is usual in important crises of whatever kind in a revolutionary country, has actually been brought about by the shedding of blood. Men lost their lives in disorders provoked by the priesthood on the wrong end of the removal of church valuables (mostly silver and precious stones) to be sold for the buying of seed and food for the famine – stricken districts. (The first train from Finland with corn so bought has just arrived.) There were arrests, and inquiry, and a trial which ended in 11 persons, most of them priests, being sentenced to death. The Patriarch Tikhon was called as a witness during the trial, and was questioned under his secular name as Citizen Belabin. The trial made it pretty clear that the action of the priests who were found guilty of stirring up riots with the object of overthrowing the Government had been inspired by a circular of his. It is probable that he will himself be tried.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

### **A Split In the Church.**

**That, however, is only a very small part of the story, in so far as it affects the Church. The essential point is that a large number of the priesthood took the same view of Tikhon's circular that was taken at the trial. This question of the taking of Church valuables for the feeding of the starving population is not by any means the question in which the Bolsheviks and as such are on one side and the Church as such is on the other. Before the issue of the Government decree making such taking compulsory many priest had done voluntarily what the Government later demanded that all should do. And when Tikhon issued his circular against giving up the property the result was a decided split, not only in the clergy but also among the secular faithful. Several bishops took the view that the horrors of the famine made its relief by these means a Christian and not an anti-- Christian act. The Bishop of Vladimir, realizing the possible effects of Tikhon's circular, actually himself warned people against provocation. These bishops were supported by some professors of theology and by a very large body of the minor clergy.**

**Vladimir Lvov, who was Procurator General under the First Provisional Government, wrote a scornful article in reply to emigrate criticism of the godlessness of the Bolsheviks in the matter. "Walk," he says, "through the boulevards of Paris and you will see in the shop windows gold church plate, gold chasubles, and precious stones taken from the icons. And do you say that the Russian émigrés have the right to sell their religious valuables for their own needs while the Russian people has not the right to take the Church valuables and to buy bread with them for the relief of its hunger?" Further, he writes: "If the priesthood wishes to be worthy of its public office it was bound to take all the Church valuables and hand them over to the starving Russian people. It is not that the Russian people beg these sacrifices, but that the fulfillment of Christian duty demands them." In even blunter language he says, "If you separate right from God, then God is no longer God, but Moloch," and characteristically adds, "God does not need valuables, and, anyhow, good painting on an icon is spoiled by precious stones."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **The Younger Priest.**

**Vladimir Lvov was not speaking for himself alone. For some time there had been open dissatisfaction, especially among the younger priest, over the actions of the leaders of the Church in placing that institution in conflict with the Soviet Government, which, they realized, did not interfere with religion as such, but might well interfere with religion if that should be turned into an instrument of politics. Many of these had even welcomed disestablishment in the interest of religion, seeing that it freed the Church from being a part of the Russian Government and the priesthood from being a caste of State officials. The split was a temperamental split – that is to say, a real one. No formula could unite priests who thought first of the dignity and power of the hierarchy and priests who saw in the new poverty and secular weakness of the Church the possibility of a new efflorescence of religion too long stifled in Russia under a dust heap of vain pomps.**

**The trial of those involved in the disorders brought about the publication of a rift in the Church which had existed for a long time. On May 12 a group of priests had a long talk with the Patriarch, pointing out that with his name was bound up the dragging of the Church into counter-revolutionary politics. They referred to his solemn anathematising of the Bolsheviks on January 19, 1922, to the issue of a circular a month later calling for the hiding of valuables, the ringing of alarm bells, and the organization of the lay believers for resistance to the Government – this circular, according to the priest Krasnitzky, brought about 1414 bloody excesses, – to the proclamation of the Churches adherence to the old regime by sending with the Archbishop Hermogen blessing and the Host to the Czar in exile at Ekaterinburg, to the promotion to high office in the Church of a whole series of persons definitely distinguishing themselves as adherents of the old monarchic regime, and generally "to the turning of the Church into a political organization covering with its chasuble irresponsible elements who wish under the flag of and in the name of the Church to overthrow the Soviet Government." They pointed out that under his leadership "the Church had fallen into the completest anarchy, and that by his policy of opposing the taking of valuables for the famine it had lost authority and influence on wide masses of the population."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Finally, they demanded the immediate summoning of a Church congress for the reform of the Church and the abdication of the Patriarch pending the decision of the congress. The Patriarch presently agreed and signed his abdication. A provisional administration has been formed under the Bishops Antonius and Leonid. A General Church Congress will meet in August.**

### **The Coming Congress.**

**It is, of course, impossible to foresee the results of the Church Congress, except indeed, the formation of yet another class vitally interested in the prevention of any counter-revolution. Every priest who takes the reformist side will know that in the event of counter – revolution he would be likely to lose his frock, if not worse. One or two things are already clear. The coming Russian Church Congress will make it clear that the Russian Church will deny the authority of emigrate priest, exactly as Russia denies the authority of émigré politicians. The congress called at Karlowitz by some of the émigré priests will be repudiated. In the "Pravda" appeared an interview with two of the priests who visited the Tikhon. The "Pravda" interviewer very possibly heightened lights and shades a little, but even so, this resentment of monarchic clerical influence from abroad was not likely to be exaggerated. "We have nothing to do with people who have run away from Russia." said the priest. "We shall take no account of them and shall ourselves regulate our Church affairs." They also suggested a significant list of questions for possible consideration by the Congress, such as a change in the basis of ecclesiastical ideology, the relation of the Church to capitalism (it is possible that a discussion on this point would be held to be as political as the activities of the Patriarch) a change in the form of the service, and a reform of church organization. With regard to the change in the form of the service, these two priests, evidently themselves extremist, said: "We shall try to bring it nearer to the forms of the first centuries of Christianity and to bring into use during the service the Russian instead of the Slavonic language."**

**The same two priests took part in a religious dispute in the Conservatoire on the subject of the Church and Life, when**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**representatives of the Tolstoyans, the Baptist , and theTrezvenniks (a sect which preachers against strong drink) pointing out that hitherto they had been in the position of sects prosecuted by the priesthood, greeted the "movement of the Russian priesthood is the direction of a renewal of the Church."**

### **The Future.**

**The latest news at the time of writing shows how sharp a turn is being taken by the Church and how deep the split within the ranks. Bishop Antonius is said to have issued a manifesto urging that Tikhon should be tried by an ecclesiastical court for misuse of his position. Bishop Antonius takes the traditional Church view of authority, with a result startling to those who remember the solemn anathematising of a whole political party by the ex-Patriarch. He begins his manifesto with the words," Though Workmen's and Peasants Government has been in existence during all these recent years, thanks to the help of God, without whose help nothing may take place in the world.**

**It is difficult to believe that any Congress can give unity to a Church divided between views so directly opposite. Nor is there only one conflict ahead. Simpler services and services in the vernacular promised not only violent opposition on the part of the conservative faithful but also a religious revival in Russia which, though the Church may really leave politics alone, will accord with difficulty with the program of the Communist Party.**

**MG. July 13, 1922.**

### **After Lenin?**

**The Men Who Will Control Russia.**

**"All Preparations Have Been Made."**

**Riga, July 8.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**In 1918, when Lenin was wounded by the bullets of an hysterical woman who, to use her own words, "wished to do something to wake the old revolutionary fighters in their graves," the immediate result was the "Terror," when several hundreds of persons were executed in a panic activity that only slackened when Lenin recovered consciousness and immediately asked that it should cease. Nothing so violent is likely to happen now, unless, of course, there should be people who seize the moment of Lenin's illness and temporary or permanent retirement do attempt once more armed revolt against the Soviet Government.**

**The conditions today are wholly different. Lenin's departure is not a sudden blow to a party scarcely yet sure of itself, to a revolutionary government with only a few months behind it. For one thing, the Government has lasted nearly 5 years. It is already rooted in custom. The young men of 1922 have grown to manhood with it and remember the pre-revolutionary epic merely as the time of their school days. For another thing Lenin's departure has been for so long a probable event. All preparations have been made. No one is taken by surprise.**

**Lenin has been unwell for a considerable time. When I was in Russia in February for the "Manchester Guardian" he was already forbidden the mild disturbance of receiving visitors. I did not see him, though he wrote me a note which showed that however ill he might be he was taking the liveliest interest in the preparations being made for the Genoa Conference. He also promised to write an article for one of the European Reconstruction Numbers edited by Mr. Keynes, but, as the time for my departure came and the article was still unwritten, it became clear that something more was wrong with him than mere overwork. He was finding it difficult and tiring to concentrate his mind and there was definite fear of a breakdown. Perhaps a symptom rather than a cause of his illness was the fact that now, after apparently forgetting about it for over two years, he began to worry about the bullet which had not been removed after his attempted assassination. The bullet was successfully removed, but the brain – weariness continued.**

**For the first time in his life Lenin was worried about himself, bothered, perhaps, at not being able to do what he had hitherto had done so easily.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**"He is ill, but not so ill as he makes himself," said one who saw him almost daily. Then came new symptoms, this time of stomach trouble, but still traceable to the fatigue less of his body than of his mind. Finally came the definite decision of the doctors that the only possible cure for him was the complete rest. It remains to be seen whether it is really possible or not. It is easier for a lazy man to rest than for such a man as Lenin, who has been accustomed for many years to fill every moment of his time.**

**Enter Rykov.**

**During all these months the machinery of government continued to function. Nothing outwardly seemed altered, no jolt, no hitch marks the change. None, except of the very few who knew, could say exactly when Lenin's hand was taken from the tiller. Only on June 18 simultaneously with a reassuring bulletin on one's health, a telegram was sent out from Moscow reporting a discussion on the State monopoly of foreign trade at which a number of persons were present. Some way down the list was the name of Rykov, and after it the abbreviation "Predsovnarkom," which means "President of the Soviet of Peoples Commissars." This, of course, was Lenin's old title. That was enough. The Council of Peoples Commissars was sitting as usual, but another figure was sitting in the President's chair instead of that little sturdy man, screwing up his eyes, nursing his chin in his hands, and with joke and hard logic forcing the other minds to follow him.**

**It is not yet certain that Rykov will actually succeed Lenin. It is possible, as Vice President, his elevation was merely mechanical and temporary. On the other hand, nearly 2 years ago I was told, by one who had good opportunities of knowing, that Rykov would be Lenin's successor. The other men who are, so to speak, near the Presidential chair are Bucharin, Stalin, Krestinsky, and Kamenev. In 1918 Kamenev was the nominal head of the State until Lenin had recovered from his wounds. He has been president of the Moscow Soviet and president of the Committee for Famine Relief. He was one of the signatories to the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. His wife is Trotsky's sister. This last fact is without political significance. He is, however, a Jew, and it is extremely unlikely that the**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Communist will give so good a weapon to their enemies as would be given them by the nomination of a Jew as President. Not even the examples of Disraeli and Lord Reading (though I have heard them mentioned in discussion on the point) are likely to move the Communist of 1922 to take the risk they took four years ago.**

**I am not sure of Krestinsky's nationality and have small personal knowledge of him, and none of Stalin. Krestinsky has been for considerable periods Commissar of Finance. A little man who in dress and appearance would pass in normal countries for a banker, in 1919 when I last saw him, he was light – heartedly looking forward to a time when, in Russia at least, people would do without money altogether. Since then, of course, his views have changed. Stalin is a Caucasian, a very close personal friend of Lenin's, and as Commissar of Nationality has been largely responsible for the creation within the boundaries of the old Russian Empire of autonomous national units, such as Tartar Republic, with its capital in Kazan, the Khirghs Republic with its capital in Orenburg, and so on. Both Stalin and Krestinsky have for a long time been included in the small inner group responsible in the first instance for the shaping of Russian policy.**

**Bucharin.**

**Rykov's most interesting rival is Bucharin. Until December, 1920, Rykov was certainly the chosen successor, but if Lenin had gone in 1921 Rykov's chances would have been very small, because he had had to bear the blame for the inefficiencies and failures of the Council of Public Economy of which he had been president. He had had an impossible task, and suffered for it. But now, perhaps, the memory of his inevitable failure there has passed, and, as a personality, he is a heavier weight than Bucharin, though nowhere near him in argument or theory. These two stand out for several reasons. They are neither of them Jews. They both of them have private lives of absolute probity. Nobody can accuse them of anything except of being convinced Communist, which in this case is praise, not blame.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**The difference between these two candidatures is just this. Rykov as President of the Council means that the Council is much more of a directorate than it has ever been under the persuasive leadership of Lenin. Rykov will not have urgent theories, will not be seeing farther ahead than colleagues, will not mold the others to his way of thinking, will not "keep his Cabinet in order." Rykov has the most engaging personality, and, I think does not know what it is to make an enemy. The favorite companion of Lenin's expeditions into the country, he is a workman by origin, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party from his earliest years, a very bad speaker, bothered in private conversation by a terrible stammer which unexpectedly interrupts him, a man of faith rather than reason, a dreamer who sees more clearly than most his vision of a new world in which there is to be no Communist Party, no anti-Communist Party, in fact no political parties at all – a happy, happy world of work and play in which will be no politics but only discussions between friends on purely economic questions. Even in his busiest days at the Council of Public Economy he would talk of this with the utmost goodwill for half an hour on end.**

**Bucharin, on the other hand, will never be without an immediate program of his own. No subject, no event, will come up for discussion without his having the most decided views one way or the other. He will always be the partisan and of an idea. He will always "take sides." Active as Rykov is passive, he would be pushing others on the occasions when others would be pushing Rykov. Bucharin is a small man, a Russian of noble family, an athlete in youth, extremely well educated and widely read, author of a number of books and pamphlets, some of a theoretical , others, like "The ABC of Communism," of a purely agitational character. He is very witty, a delightful conversationalist, childlike in his love of sweets, as weak constitutionally as he is strong physically. On several occasions he has had to go into a nursing home.**

**Bucharin is extremely popular among the workmen, having perhaps kept nearer to them than any of the other Communist leaders. He has never lived in the Kremlin. He has the advantage of never having filled an administrative post, and so of never having earned practical criticism. He was a strong opponent of the peace of Brest-Litovsk (he afterwards**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

openly declared that Lenin was right), and in 1920 wrote an article called "The Tactic of Advance," in which he urged that the French Revolution did not end until 1811, and that, regardless of what was happening in France, Napoleons marches continued to the end to carry with them revolutionary ideas. In this article he foreshadowed a similar phase in the Russian Revolution (Warsaw probably was in his mind). He was rather sat upon at the time, and even the editor who published his article (Zinoviev) came in for a certain amount of criticism. The article, however, was characteristic. He does not urge an immediate attack on Western Europe, far from it, but, supposing once more the conflict with Western Powers should bring about a state of war in which again the face of the Revolution should be bound up with that of the Red Army, even if this should coincide with further internal relapse from the extreme experiment, he would not be among those who would hold that the end had come, but would be prepared to argue that it was a normal stage of revolutionary development.

**Trotsky.**

Trotsky, who in the outer world is usually coupled with Lenin, may, at this stage at any rate, be practically ruled out as a possible candidate. He is a Jew, and although by sheer ability he has won for himself a quite astonishing popularity even among staff officers of the old army, his nationality stands in his way. Also, he is more admired than respected. At several critical moments in the early history of the Revolution his judgment was at fault, and though the last four years are commonly said to have steadied him and give him breadth, he is still supposed to be too easily excited. "He should have been an aviator; he flies so easily into the air," said a friend of his three years ago, and the very qualities that make him supreme as orator and pamphleteer become defects that outweigh those other qualities as organizer and administrator that enabled him to work the miracle of the Red Army's creation.

Trotsky is considered ambitious, and that in itself is against him. The majority of the Communist, while full of praise for him and gratitude to him, would prefer as President of less flamboyant figure.

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. October 10, 1922.**

**What Russia Wants.**

**Reasons For The Rejection Of Urquhart Concessions.**

**Plan For Straits: No Warships To Pass In Either Direction –  
With A Naval Holiday In The Black Sea.**

**Moscow, Sunday.**

**Left side of column is unreadable for the first two paragraphs.**

**Suggested Regime for the Straits.**

**I doubt if the importance attributed by the Russians to the question of the Straits is realized abroad. The Soviet leaders talk of the Dardanelles with all the war – time eloquence and conviction of Professor Miliukov, with however, one vital difference: they do not ask for Russian domination over either the Straits or Constantinople. They want a guarantee that in no circumstances will there be stoppage of merchant ships, and in no circumstances the passage of warships.**

**I gather that the Soviet Government is not prepared with a definite formula, but I have heard the following suggestion: "No warships of any nation to pass either way through the Straits, and this being internationally agreed, then the Black Sea States to agree to complete abstinence, say, for 10 years from naval shipbuilding."**

**A leading article in the "Izvestia" illustrates the matter in which the Russian Government sets on a single agenda list the Urquhart agreement and participation in the Dardanelles solution: "The Soviet Government's decision on the question of the Urquhart concessions should show the English press the direction of Soviet policy in the Near East in general and with regard to England in particular. The decision showed clearly the enormous significance the Soviet Government attributes to its participation in the solution of Near Eastern affairs. The**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Government is both seeking formal admission to the International Conference deciding Near Eastern affairs and also trying to secure that in deciding these matters the Great Powers should consider Russian interest."**

**Further: "Not Soviet Russia alone is interested in the avoidance of Near Eastern conflicts. It is to the interest of the other Great Powers also that the non— satisfaction of Russia's needs should not become the starting point for new conflicts in the Near East."**

### **The Dilemma Of France.**

**After saying that most of the French press are silent on the question of Russia's admission to the Conference this article proceeds: "This silence shows the French press unable to defend the absurd thesis of the desirability of not admitting Soviet Russia to a decision affecting Russia's vital interest. The idea of the renewal of Russian – French relations has already seized far too wide circles of the French bourgeoisie for the French press to be in a position openly to express itself in favor of a policy the only result of which would be that Russia would be compelled to move for a long time along the rails of a policy directed against France. The country which should refuse to Russia the right to take part in the decision of so vital a question as that of the Straits would be for long years rejecting the possibility of normal relations with Russia."**

**It is precisely this idea that normal relations are not to follow even concessions on such an enormous scale as Mr. Urquhart's has so far strengthened the hands of those opposed to the extent of Russia's yielding as to bring about a refusal to ratify the agreement.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. October 14, 1922.**

**Trotsky And Trade Agreements.**

**Soviet Bid For Recognition.**

**Urquhart Contract Issues.**

**Moscow, Friday.**

**Trotsky's speech to the union of young Communist confirms the diagnosis already telegraphed of the position of the Urquhart agreement. "The agreement," he said, "was unconditionally rejected because the policy does not give the smallest guarantee for the conclusion of an agreement on such an enormous scale, which presupposes the possibility of normal relations between the two countries. In the circumstances, when England tramples the elementary rights and interest of the peoples of our federations, the Soviet Government found it impossible to sign an agreement with an English citizen for the execution of that agreement. I repeat, it presupposes a minimum of loyal relations between countries and Governments."**

**"But," he went on, "of course, if the English Government should change its policy, recognize the Soviet Government, and attempt to come to an agreement concerning the most important political questions, then the Urquhart agreement, with this or that change or without change, might be confirmed. This agreement is a business agreement with a separate group of capitalist who obtain mad, rapacious profits, but brings us new technical assistance, and helps us quite apart from its intention to develop with a quicker tempo the industry of our country. With every month, with every year, the number of foreign applicants will increase, and the conditions which we shall set will approach more and more to the normal."**

**It is perhaps worth noticing that the agreement was rejected by the Council of Peoples Commissars, not by the Executive Committee, which, according to the Constitution is capable at any moment of reversing the decision.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. October 18, 1922.**

**Russia To Reorganize Her Fleet.  
Remarkable Meeting In Moscow.  
Corn And The Straits.**

**Moscow, Tuesday.**

**Last night we were given another illustration of the growing Russian determination to be treated as a Great Power. At a meeting in the Great Theater the Communist Union of Youth accepted the honorary chieftainship of the Russian Fleet. As in other countries individuals on becoming honorary colonels dress up in regimental uniform, so here the theater dressing – room was an amusing scene, while at the Proscenium Congress a dozen youthful Communists struggled into sailors blouses and trousers, in which costumes they took their seats on the stage.**

**Trotsky, in a blue coat with brass buttons, opened his speech with a broadside addressed to the press – box, where, he said, foreign correspondents were preparing to announce to the world that this ceremony was another proof of Russia's imperialism and militarism. He went on to deny this, telling the story of how in 1920 French ships bringing Russian soldiers back to Odessa had on board 17 airplanes destined for Wrangel. The Odessa authorities seized these as contraband of war. The French said the airplanes were intended for Constantinople, and then agreed to their destruction, but kept the negotiations going on till other French ships arrived, when they threatened a continuous bombardment of Odessa if the airplanes were not given up.**

**"We gave up the airplanes," said Trotsky. "which were taken to Wrangel and used against Russian peasants and workmen. If we had had even a small fleet the French would not have dared thus to disregard international law."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**Trotsky urged that Russian needs of fleet not for international aggression but "to save coast towns from the risk of being razed to the ground at the will of this or that mad bourgeois admiral."**

**Karl Radek referred to the quarrel with England over fishing and waters claimed as territorial by Russia (this dispute is much older than the Revolution), but the real reason for this serious inauguration of the idea of a fleet is undoubtedly the question of the Straits. The idea in the minds of the Communist, as Radek puts it, is: "In a few years we shall have corn to export. We shall allow nobody to hold the keys of the gate through which that corn must move."**

**The ceremony in the Great Theater means that throughout Russia an agitation is beginning similar to that which reorganized the Army, the Communist attempting for the first time in Russian history to give Russian sailors that consciousness of their responsibility to the country which, as Radek said in his speech, is felt with pride by every British sailor.**

**It is difficult to illustrate the character of this gathering in a certain sense as a patriotic meeting, except by pointing out that during the proceedings the "International" was sung nine times.**

**MG. October 23, 1922.**

**Russia And The Straits.  
Wanted – A Solution To Avoid Wars.  
Value Of Neutrality Doubted.  
Interview With Trotsky.**

**Moscow, Saturday.**

**I saw Trotsky today in the War Office, which, in the matter of cleanliness, provides a great contrast to certain other Government buildings and is a still greater contrast to the small room guarded by a workman with a**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

rifle, in the Smolni Convent which was Trotsky's office in 1917. Speaking of Mr. Lloyd George, he said: "In Russia today he is probably the best hated foreign statesman."

I said that Mr. Lloyd George himself as most people in England would be surprised to hear it, and referred to his memorandum for seeing the results of the Versailles Treaty and his continued desire for an understanding with Russia.

Trotsky replied: "What you say is a testimony to his brain but damaging to his character, since, with such opinions, he failed to act on them. But there is no question about his cleverness. The shorthand report of his interview with the Labor deputation which was protesting against a possible Turkish war, just as it stands without the alteration of a single word, is a perfect little drama, and should be played to illustrate the danger to workmen of those even little educated in bourgeois ideas.

"Labor delegates, even such honorable trade unionist as Miss Bondfield, are powerless in front of him. They come to talk without knowing what they want, and Mr. Lloyd George does with them precisely what he likes. The ruling classes in England must be mad if, as the newspapers suggest, they are getting rid of such a man."

Discussing the Dardanelles, Trotsky began by saying he disagreed with my statement in the "Manchester Guardian" that Marxism was the cause of their belief in the identity of big business and Governments. "The proof of the pudding is in the eating," he said, "and it is impossible not to observe the actual fact that big business and Governments act in unison."

### **The Straits: Peace or War Interest?**

That debatable point set aside, I asked him whether Russia, and laying stress on the Straits question, was thinking of its importance in time of peace or time of war.

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**"That is rather too cunning a method of posing the question," replied Trotsky. "Russia is anxious for such a solution of the question as shall not be a source of future wars. If actually there should be war, then no solution of the question should bind the stronger side. The neutrality of the Straits would be violated like the neutrality of Greece or Belgium. The Straits were important during the last war, but possibly would be of no importance in a war between differently constituted groups, and it is impossible for anyone to foresee what groups may be formed.**

**"Our interest is to avoid war altogether, but as a first step we must be satisfied in the elementary demands that in time of peace French battleships shall not be able to come in and blackmail Odessa by threat of bombardment, and that on a day when Lord Curzon wakes up in a bad temper he shall not be able to relieve his feelings by announcing that he will order British ships to sink Russian submarines at sight. These two examples are taken from things we have already experienced.**

**"Further, we realize that England, without going to war against us, can, for example, make Rumania and Bulgaria dominant in the Black Sea by the simple method of giving or lending ships. We want as solution satisfactory for time of peace, and we should prefer a solution that would make war impossible."**

**Russia and Turkey.**

**I remarked that yesterday's Note emphasized that Russia had already treated with Turkey, and that opponents of Russia's presence at the Peace Conference would say that Russia was already committed to support Turkey.**

**Trotsky replied: "Well, they know that Turkey is equally committed to support Russia, and every Power at the Conference is bound in some way or other by all sorts of previous agreements. In any case our opponents should be glad to know our line of policy in advance, and whether they are pleased or not does not in the least affect the importance, with a view to future peace, of our participation in the agreement.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**"They must also know that we are bound by principles, and whereas it is possible to get round a treaty, it is impossible to get round a principle. I imagine our principles are much less welcome to them than any treaty."**

**"Apart from the probable solution, what do you think of the territorial questions?" I asked.**

**"Even if we were not interested parties we should naturally think that the Straits ought to be Turkish," he replied.**

**I asked what he thought of the proposed control of the League of Nations.**

**"We always prefer to deal with the masters rather than with their lackeys," answered Trotsky. "In Germany we prefer to deal with Stinnes, capitalist and master, than with Scheidemann and Company, who are merely lackeys. Similarly we prefer to deal with Mr. Lloyd George and M. Poincare than with the League of Nations."**

**MG. October 24, 1922.**

**What Russia Thinks Of The Crisis.  
Gloomy Picture Of Tory Rule.  
Chicherin Optimistic.**

**Moscow, Sunday Night (Received Yesterday).**

**Moscow heard of Mr. Lloyd George's resignation with a sort of glee. He was the only "bourgeois" politician for whose intelligence the Communist had any real respect. As artists they enjoyed his virtuosity in the political play, and though they considered him their most dangerous because most subtle enemy, they were capable of giving him wholehearted applause when he brought off any move particularly neat.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**There is much difference of opinion on what are likely to be the results of his resignation, but it is the general belief that his fall will intensify the conflict between employers and labor. "He will be followed by people who will come to blows with Labor, whereas Lloyd George, far more dangerous, was always ready with a kiss," they say. Or again, "The English policy, which has been rapier, will now be a fist."**

**"Izvestia" thinks a Conservative Ministry merely are open expression of a situation already long in existence.**

**"Pravda" comments: "The coming to power of the Conservatives means nothing less than the embitterment of relations, first between the forces which make up the British Empire with conflicts in Ireland, Egypt, India, and the colonies: then with the working class, which has hitherto been enmeshed in the honeyed words of the cleverness of all Imperialist; and finally with Soviet Russia."**

**Chicherin, on the other hand, takes a radically opposite view so far as foreign relations are concerned. "Lloyd George," he says, "was more farseeing than the others, and though Churchill succeeded in postponing England's entry on the road which her interest dictated, she is now on that road, and is unlikely to leave it. As for the Near East, the Conservatives are less anti—Turkish. Our program of support for the national aspirations of Turkey and the realization of her sovereign rights will probably meet with less opposition on the part of the new Cabinet."**

**Trotsky says: "the only Government in the world older than our own has resigned. Probably Lloyd George wanted to give us a pleasant surprise on the occasion of our five years' jubilee."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. October 27, 1922.**

**Japan And Siberia.  
Evacuation Delay And The Motive.  
Chaos At Vladivostok.**

**Moscow, Wednesday.**

**Japanese intervention is drawing doubtfully towards an unruly close, but the actions of the Japanese Military Command suggest that the Japanese, in going, have small intention of leaving peace behind them. The troops of the Far Eastern Republic could have been in Vladivostok over a week ago, but the Japanese threaten to postpone the evacuation if the troops advanced, and even persuaded them to retire some miles.**

**Meanwhile there is chaos in the town, and the Japanese, besides removing Russian ships and destroying the fortifications, are sending military stores (of which an enormous quantity was supplied by the Allies) across the neighboring Manchurian frontier, where they are gracefully received by anti-Pekin and pro-Japanese General Tchantsolin.**

**Simultaneously, it is reported that yet another White Russian Government has been formed at Vladivostok under Japanese protection. Thus the Japanese are promoting both Chinese and Russian civil wars, with advantage to themselves.**

**Telegrams from Chita announced that delegations of the townspeople visited the English and American Consuls begging them to use their influence to get, if not troops, at least militia, admitted to Vladivostok to end the existing pandemonium. The Consuls replied that they regretted they were powerless to do anything in face of the Japanese Military Command, but that they were making representations in Tokyo. Chichern insists that the idea behind Japanese action is the annexation of Northern Sakhalin, which would mean Japanese control of navigation on the Amur, the most important river in all Eastern Siberia**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. October 30, 1922.**

**Labor &The Urquhart Agreement.**

**Mr. Clynes's Telegram To Soviet.**

**"Ratification Would Ease Position In Election."**

**Moscow, October 27.**

**Considerable amusement has been caused here by a telegram handed by Mr. J. R. Clynes to the Soviet representative in London and forwarded in cipher. It is published with comments by Seklov in to-days "Izvestia." The following is a translation from the Russian version: –**

**Immediate ratification of the Urquhart Agreement would considerably ease the position of the Labor party in the coming elections. Churchill and Curzon and their supporters at all election meetings will declare it impossible to deal with Bolsheviks as proved at the Hague, Genoa, and now by the non– ratification of a purely commercial agreement. I am convinced all my colleagues would agree with this statement. –CLYNES**

**Steklov spans two solemn columns staring at this statement from all sides. He recognizes the obvious honesty and goodwill of Mr. Clynes, and is consequently all the more dumbfounded at the spectacle of a Labor leader trying privately to help the capitalist with the object of strengthening Labor's case at the elections.**

**That is the way it looks from Moscow, and nothing has more clearly illustrated the gulf between Russian and English Labor ideology since the meeting in 1917 when the Russians said they did not want Constantinople, and the British Labor delegate replied, "If you don't want it,, we will take it."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. October 30, 1922.**

**Russia & Near East.**

**Invitation To Lausanne.**

**Straits Section Only.**

**Objection To Academic Consultation.**

**Claim To Fall Conference.**

**Moscow, Saturday.**

**Last night a Note inviting Russia to send delegates to Lausanne to discuss the Straits question was handed to Chicherin by the British Commercial Mission in Moscow. The terms of the Soviet reply are still undecided, and are the subject of lively debate.**

**It is already clear that the Russians are more than dissatisfied with the invitation, which, while admitting them to discussion of the Straits, explicitly excludes them from the Peace Conference proper, which in their opinion will make separate discussion of the Straits purely academic. Many in Government quarters inclined to refuse to participate merely in debates of what they think will be an impotent committee, and are confident that they will have the mass of the people behind them in support of such refusal.**

**Russia, they say, is no longer the Russia that turned a deaf ear to Professor Miliukov. The defensive war against intervention, the defeat of all the forces which had foreign help, have made the Russians more consciously a nation than ever before. No lectures in Moscow are so desperately overcrowded as those on foreign affairs, and there is indignation at Russia's exclusion in classes which before the revolution scarcely realized that they had a country at all. I hear frequent reference to the treaty with Turkey which is said to prove that Russia has already shown goodwill in the pacification of the Near East, and has already taken part in the settlement to such an extent as to make ridiculous her exclusion from the final decisions if those decisions are intended to be of permanent value.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **The Russian Agreement.**

**"Izvestia" quotes with approval the Turkish deputy from Trehizond, who, writing in an Angora paper, suggests that "the real object of isolating the Straits question is to postpone its decision." He writes: "The separation of the Straits question from all others brings us into a blind alley. We can hardly agree with this. Peace will not be assured us even for a few years, and military expenditure will not decrease. No peace treaty that does not decide the question of the Straits can be effective.**

**Stekhov, writing on the text in the "Izvestia," remarks: "We affirm that it is impossible to separate the question of the Straits from the general question of the pacification of the Near East and peace with Turkey. Of two things one: Either at the second partial Conference on the Straits the whole series of decisions taken at the first general Peace Conference will have to be reconsidered and redecided, or we shall have to accept without criticism or objection whatever the Entente diplomats have thought fit to decide at the first conference, whatever they succeed in fastening on Turkey."**

**The gist of Steklov's article is that if the Black Sea Powers are not admitted to the actual Conference, then there will be no possibility of real peace in the Black Sea.**

**Steklov accurately reflects the opinion of Moscow, although the official reply, which is still unwritten, may be more moderate in tone. Even if it be so, that will not affect the central fact of the situation here, which is that Soviet Russia, looking at the map and surveying the enormous area from Odessa to Vladivostok, and reminding herself that she holds a greater length of the Black Sea coast than even Turkey, is asking with increasing bitterness why Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Japan are held to be more interested than she.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. November 4, 1922.**

**Turk Control Of Straits.  
Russia For Pre-War Conditions.  
Chicherin On Lausanne.  
Full Participation Or None.  
To Stand With Angora.**

**Moscow, Friday.**

**I am inclined to think the view is gaining ground in Moscow that with regard to the Near Eastern Conference half a loaf is not better than no bread, and that Russia by staying away would be in a stronger position than if present, unless she were there on terms of equality with other members of the Conference.**

**An article in "Izvestia," signed with the pseudonym which conceals a diplomat of the old regime known throughout the world, points out that if, as people falsely suppose, Russia's object is to stir up trouble, when Western diplomacy is doing its best to help her. "Leave Russian interest unsatisfied, leave our aspirations unfulfilled and the problems which stand before her unsolved, and, moreover, leave her with her hands untied. Not to satisfy her desires and at the same time to leave her hands free to satisfy them, what wisdom!"**

**"Western diplomacy thinks to leave Russia outside the treaty. It is giving into her hands the most powerful weapon against itself."**

**"The diplomats of the Entente are clearly great friends of our Department of Political Enlightenment. They are very careful in trying to provide it with material for agitation."**

**Willingness to take this view-point is probably increased by events at Angora, which suggest that the National Assembly is unlikely to compromise over the national pact unless forced, in which case Russia, standing aside, will be able to say: "You are making another peace after**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**the pattern of Versailles." The events of the last few days have made the Russians surer of their allies.**

### **M. Chicherin Questioned.**

**That impression is confirmed by an interview which I had with M. Chicherin in the Foreign Office this afternoon. I had ask about the reply to the Lausanne invitation. M. Chicherin said: "We are not invited to participate in the Conference. We have not changed our position – namely, that we have a right to share in the Conference, not merely to be present at part of it. We are delighted at the news from Angora that the National Assembly has definitely abolished the Ottoman Empire. We regard that as a sign that the Turks repudiate those of their compatriots who are ready to barter away the sovereign rights of Turkey. In this, we are in full agreement with Angora, and desire to take our place after the Conference to uphold the right of the Turkish people to dispose of themselves and their territory."**

**"Then you favor Turkish control over the Straits?"**

**"Certainly," replied the Commissar. "The Turks have a right to to this if only for the protection of Constantinople."**

**"And that the Straits should be fortified by Turkey?"**

**"Naturally. How else can Turkey reserve her sovereign rights or keep the Straits closed to warships? During the war it was only the fact that the Straits were fortified that prevented them from being forced. Moreover, in time of war the Straits would in any case be closed, since either side could close them. We think Turkey should have the right to build a fleet and have airplanes and submarines and all else necessary for the defense of the Straits. With regard to an international agreement for the free passage of merchant ships through the Straits, clause 5 of our treaty with Turkey provides for a commission representing all interested States on the understanding that the sovereign rights of Turkey remained inviolable. That is naturally still our program."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**, "Then," I remarked, "you are prepared to leave the Dardanelles as before the war?"**

**Turkish – Russian Solidarity.**

**"We cannot justifiably do otherwise. No change on the map was necessary to express the new spirit of both nations. We have not inherited the territorial ambitions of the Czardom, nor the Czardom's traditional hostility to the Turk. We shall be satisfied if the Straits are free to merchant ships and closed to all but Turkish warships."**

**"That means," I concluded, "you are prepared to stake everything on the continuance of good relations between Turkey and Russia?"**

**"Precisely. The interest of the Turkish and Russian peoples so closely coincide that we can consider them identical."**

**MG. November 20, 1922.**

**How Russia Views Lausanne.**

**Desire To Stand Outside Doubtful Straits Settlement.**

**The Conference which, by deciding the fate of Turkey, will decide that of the entrance to the Black Sea, opens today, and the greatest of all the Black Sea Powers has no representatives sitting at the table. Russia is not there, though she may yet agree to come and state here the case without having a vote to cast in the Conference proper, and without having to affix her seal to whatever agreement may be reached.**

**It is seldom that a diplomatic skirmish ends with the satisfaction of both sides, but, oddly enough, that seems to be so in this case.**

**Russian diplomacy is an odd mixture of farsightedness and hand-to-mouth reaction on facts. It has ceased to be the expression of a Revolutionary Committee with, perhaps, only a little time to give, and**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**impelled to take the risk of using that time for the hurried erection of landmarks in history. It is no longer prepared for a short life and a merry one based on the annunciation of first principles.**

**First principles are receding into the background as the basis of diplomatic activities. Just as Communist who became leaders of the armies shed their long hair and began to resemble in appearance and manner the generals of the Czar, so those of them who became diplomats have insensibly come to take on the protective coloring of the caste they have joined. And protective coloring is not merely a matter of feathers and frock coats. In its most effective form it is the actual habit of a man's mind. While retaining first principles as a stand – by, as masts to which to pin in their red flags, in any case of real desperation Russian diplomats have come to work very much like the rivals and to adjust their manoeuvres to the weather of each day.**

### **A Russian Advantage.**

**In only one important matter they have a real advantage over ourselves. No small body of Russian citizens anywhere abroad is able to make its private interest decide the policy of the nation. That perhaps will come with the development of Russia's foreign trade. It has not come yet. They have no little group to reckon with, which having brought one foreign Government to eat out of its hand, naturally does not want to have to begin the laborious task of establishing such relationship with another.**

**At the same time, in spite of this advantage over us, vividly illustrated in the story of the diplomatic exchanges that preceded Lausanne, they are already as dependent as ourselves on the slight changes of tension here and there that make the history of any nations relations with another seem so strange a string of contradictions and incongruities.**

**Two years ago, when they were still more or less isolated, I could not imagine any action of our own Foreign Office deciding in a moment the relations between the Russians and the Turks. Russian and Turk two years ago played by themselves in a corner of the room. Now they are**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**playing in the same game as ourselves, and every move of ours has its instant effect on their own tactics.**

**With regard to the Lausanne Conference there is a pretty general feeling in Moscow that it can only come to some artificial and brittle agreement, and that Russia will be in a stronger position if able to point to it from without, as she points to the Versailles peace, than if she were to become an accessory to it.**

### **A Complication.**

**It should be understood that the Turkish defeat of the Greeks and the mere possibility of Turkish agreement with the Allies raised for Russia two questions not easy to decide together. One of these, a question of the immediate future, was that of the relations between Turkey and Russia. The other was that of the Straits, a question which would become more and more important as Russia should become capable of export and import through the Black Sea.**

**The latter question was simple enough and gave the Russian diplomats no difficulty. They had at least to register a protest against their exclusion, a protest which they knew would be very well backed by public opinion. But with regard to their relations with Turkey it was all – important to them to know what the character of the conference was to be. A real agreement in their sense of those words was just possible, in which case, of course, they wish to be there. They reasoned that if the other sort of agreement was intended they would hardly be admitted as avowed friends of Turkey. Just for the moment their diplomatic line was clear. They could safely press their very well – grounded claims, to a share in the Conference. They had excellent arguments and so far could make no mistakes.**

**The first difficulty came with the arrival of seemingly authoritative news that they had been invited. As they had not received any invitation they assumed that it was on the way. The news was inaccurate, but for the moment it upset their calculations by making them think that the sort of**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**agreement was intended to which they could subscribe, which meant a considerable weakening of the Allies towards Turkey.**

### **Mosul Oil.**

**They looked hurriedly round for a reason for this, and found one in a possible bargain over Mosul oil. That seemed to threaten a change of direction in the hungry looks of the Angora Assembly. Was it possible that Turkey was to get good terms from the Allies and accordingly ceased to look to Moscow as to its only friend?**

**Moscow was only slightly reassured on this point by the arrival of the British Note on behalf of the Allied Governments, which asked Russia to send representatives, not to the Peace Conference, but to a supplementary discussion of the Straits question, which question, as the Russians pointed out, would be decided in essentials by the Peace Treaty proper, leaving nothing else to be settled but the formula in which the results of a Peace Treaty were to be stated. They meant that to mean that there was rather less danger than they had assumed of a Turkish rapprochement with possible unfortunate consequences for their own relation with Turkey, and at the same time there was small hope of getting the only??? of the Straits question that would, satisfy them by closing the Dardanelles to???**

**[next one paragraph of text on the right cannot be read.].**

### **Doubt About Turkey.**

**They were similarly very doubtful about the intentions of Turkey. News from there was far from reassuring. It was reported that "the aims of Turkish leaders no longer amounted to more than a desire to support Greeks and Armenians as agents of the Allies in the exploitation of Turkey." I cannot be sure, but have considerable reason to believe that the Russians behaved much as any normal Government would have behaved in such circumstances, and moved troops to Batum just in case the Turks should be bribed to face the other way.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**The result of all this doubt was that for the moment the Russians were quite unable to reply safely to the partial invitation they had at last received. Characteristic of the extreme haziness of their position was the fact that Lenin, speaking at the Executive Committee referred to Lausanne and to the delegates who were to go there as if it had already been decided to send them, when, as a matter of fact, the Note of reply had not yet been sent, and when it was sent was not an acceptance. The Note was written and rewritten and defaced from day to day.**

**Then one short telegram made the path of Russian diplomacy clear again. That telegram announced that a representative of the Constantinople Government had been invited to take part in the Peace Conference. The Russians threw up their hats with joy. They had never for a moment expected that we should go so far to help them.**

### **The Allied Blunder.**

**For to everyone who knew how the Constantinople Government had been created after the suppression of the Parliament, how its creation had been the thing that more than anything else helped to consolidate Kemal's position in 1920, it was perfectly clear that to invite a representative of this phantom was to destroy any hope that the Angora Turks might have cherished that the Allies intended to come to friendly agreement with them. It was an act that could only have the effect of exasperating Angora and of strengthening the hands of those who had said that the friendly front of the Allies was not to be trusted.**

**"What? They are still determined not to admit that the real Turkish government is at Angora? They're still going to pretend that the important puppets of Constantinople have authority outside the district under foreign military control. We will show them."**

**And Angora would proceed to make every extravagant gesture it could conceive with the idea of forcing the real position upon the attention of the world. In so doing it would be making friendly (as apart from compulsory) agreement less likely. That from the Russian point of view**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**was less important than the fact that as a result Angora would once more be fighting a lone hand and conscious that it had everybody against it accept Russia.**

**The great danger lest Russia should be in the humiliating impossible position of being more pro-Turkish than the Turks would be gone, and Russia would use the opportunity for a new confirmation of Russian – Turkish friendship. There was just a day or two of excited waiting to make sure of the Turkish reaction. It came in a telegram that said that Angora had declared the liquidation of the Ottoman Empire and thereby taken a position which made it certain that she would need all the help that Russia had any intention of offering her.**

### **Moscow's Reply Revised.**

**Moscow, waiting one more day for confirmation of this joyful news, and knowing, I fancy, that it was thereby making quite sure that it would not be invited to the Peace Conference, revised the Note which was already prepared and reiterated its old demand for invitation declaring at the same time that its task at the Conference would be the defense of Turkish interest.**

**This, of course was perfectly safe, because the solution of the Straits question, which Russia wants for her own sake, is precisely that which would satisfy the Turks. Russia was once again in a position with nothing to lose, and Russian diplomats, after a moment of anxiety, were once more able to be optimistic.**

**Things have proceeded as they expected. They are safe from being invited to the actual Conference, and so from being made parties to an agreement unsatisfactory to Turkey and themselves which they are convinced would be the result if, indeed, an agreement is reached at all. They have, I think, received repetition of the original invitation to come as they put it**

**[remainder unreadable.]**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. November 22, 1922.**

**Lenin On The State Of Russia.**

**A Remarkable Interview.**

**Seven Questions – "Such Questions!" – And His Written Answers.**

**Is Russia Going Backward To A More Primitive State? – Lenin's Denial.**

Since Lenin's return to the Kremlin he has been guarded with extreme care from the slightest unnecessary exertion. Many of the Communist leaders have themselves been unable to get a talk with him, and some of them complained bitterly on that account. He is under doctor's orders, and a small group of people devotedly attached to him see to it that those orders are accurately obeyed. However, on October 26, seven in the evening, Chicherin's secretary telephoned to me to ask if I were ready to go to see Lenin immediately. I replied that I was. Half an hour later he telephoned that the interview was postponed til morning. Half an hour after that he telephoned a third time to ask that I should put in writing the particular questions I wanted answered and to give Lenin time to consider them before he received me.

I immediately drew up a series of questions, seven in all, of which only two were concerned with the immediate news of the day. It seemed to me that it would be of greater interest to get Lenin's views on the present phase of the Revolution, if he could be induced to state them than to obtain conventional replies to questions on foreign policy, replies which, with the data at hand, one could perfectly give for oneself. So I asked questions with the deliberate intention of provoking Lenin into personal expression. I do not think the result has been altogether satisfactory, because, in one or two cases, he refused to be provoked and avoided the real issue by limiting the meaning of a word (for example, by limiting the word Nepman to "small trader." whereas it is actually used to describe all persons engaged in private business activities outside the framework of the State institutions) or by mistranslation of a word (as in his answer to question II., where he confuses "profitable" with "possible"). Still, the result has certainly been

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**the crystallization in small space of Lenin's diagnosis of the present situation in Russia, and I am told that, when his answers to these questions have appeared in the "Manchester Guardian," questions and answers together are to be printed in Russia.**

### **Lenin's "Mild Annoyance."**

**The immediate result of my putting these particular questions was the postponement of my interview with Lenin. It was postponed from day to day, because the answers were not ready, and with each day I heard from different sources of the mild annoyance they had caused him. From Radek I heard that he "was swearing at me for putting such questions." From Chicherin that he described them as having the character of snakes in the grass. There was indeed at one time a doubt whether he would answer them at all, and I said I was ready if necessary to withdraw them and submit others. Lenin, however, for the reasons he gave when I saw him, had made up his mind to answer them. In the meantime day after day went by and I was not allowed to see him, and was told that I should not see him until he had written the answers which he would give me at our interview. Finally, I lost hope and prepared to leave Russia, and had already obtained my visa and place on the trains when, on my going to say goodbye to him, Chicherin expressed great surprise that I had not already got my answers, said that he knew Lenin was actually writing them and that he wanted to see me before I left. Accordingly I gave up my place in the train and waited for the next, which was to leave on Monday.**

**The next day (Friday) Mrs. Radek told me over the telephone that Lenin would receive me that night. I was to be at Radek's about 8 o'clock. I was there, and had only waited a minute or two when Lenin telephoned to Radek and said he was very tired after a long committee meeting and could only be allowed to talk for a few minutes, whereas if I were to wait till the next morning he could manage a longer talk. I asked if the questions would be answered if I were to wait till morning. Radek repeated the question, and I could hear Lenin's chuckle at the other end of the wire. He said he could not get the answers done by morning, and that it was my own fault. "Such questions! – such questions!" Then for**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**the first time I believe that he really was answering the questions himself. I had had an unpleasant suspicion that other people were writing the answers for him. It was so unlike the old Lenin not to be ready and eager with jest and logic to deal with any questions that might be put before him. I asked if, supposing I could wait till morning, I could be absolutely certain of seeing him. Radek said, "if I were you I should make sure of seeing him now." So it was arranged that I should go round at once.**

**I hurried round to the door at the foot of the staircase going up to Lenin's room. The sentinel had just got a scrap of paper with my name on it, and let me pass when I showed him my ticket of admission to the Kremlin. I went upstairs and was met by one of the secretaries, who took me to Lenin's room. I may say here that I had heard that Lenin now lived in a sound – proof room, like that in which Carlyle worked in Cheyne Row. The room is the same that he has worked in for the last three years. The door is padded in the fashion common in many offices. I am not sure whether it was so formally or not.**

### **Lenin Changed.**

**I have not seen Lenin since his illness, and my first impression as we shook hands was that he had not changed at all. My second, as we began to talk, was that he really was extraordinarily tired. Now, just as when I saw him last, he sat at the corner of his table, so that he could put his hands on the papers he needed, and yet was sitting almost knee to knee with me, whom he planted immediately before him. His physical appearance, his charm of manner, these were the same. Something, however was different. I had never before seen him tired. In the old days, he used to keep up a machine-gun fire of questions, bombarding to such an extent that it was difficult to squeeze in any particular ???**

**[Remainder of passage in column one is unreadable]**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **[COLUMN 2]**

**I felt rather wretched and seeing him make an effort who had seemed to do all he did without effort of any kind. It was, of course, a particularly bad moment to see him, since he had just come from a committee meeting, and I knew that the doctors had said that he was not yet in a condition to submit himself to such strains.**

**There was a little of the old Lenin when he flung back his head in laughter to think of the Fascist (Mussolini ruling in Rome – a merry story!) – and a little in the interest he showed in the English elections. But he spoke mostly of my questions which lay on his table together with a number of sheets covered with red – ink notes and one or two sheets of green typescript, in which form, with Lenin's manuscript corrections, I eventually received the answers. "Why could you not ask questions like a correspondent?" said he "Why, I had a list of questions the other day, and I could answer them so, so, so, one after the other with no difficulty at all – but yours. You have got them all on one small sheet and I have written three large ones in reply, and I'm still not finished with them. There was a time when I thought I would not answer them at all. Then I thought you had carefully put together the basis of criticism abroad and that they ought to be answered. And I'm going to answer them. That I promise you. I will try to get them done before you go." He talked then a little about the last question, laughing at the idea that there had been Left or other parties opposed to the ratification of the Urquhart Agreement or in favor of it. "I saw no parties at all." He spoke in passing of the Lausanne Conference and seemed to assume that Russia would, after all, send delegates. "Nothing will be lost by their going there." He then went back to my questions, asking about the precise meaning of one or two English words. Then, since he was extremely tired, and I had promised to stay only a few minutes, I left him. I said good-by, and went down the stairs almost wishing I could have stolen my questions off his table.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

### **The Answers Done.**

**On this Sunday, when he takes the weekly holiday, he must have worked at them, for on Monday, just as I was packing to leave Moscow, I got a telephone message that the answers were done. I hurried round to the Kremlin and got them, just in time to take them with me to the train.**

**Here they are. I have printed each question separately, with Lenin's written answer to it. It is only necessary to say in the explanation that the New Economic Policy is commonly known in Russia as Nep (N.E.P) and that the persons who have sprung into activity through it, the little traders and the big traders alike, in fact the people whose activities have become legalized only since the introduction of the New Economic Policy, are commonly known as the Nepmen. I regret very much that the questions were submitted in English, because and in at least one case it is clear that the language has been the source of misunderstanding.**

**The Problem Of The Nepman. Question one: "I find (in Moscow) immense economic activity, everybody buying and selling, and a new trading class obviously in existence. I asked, How is it that the Nepman is not, and shows no signs of wishing to be, a political force?"**

**Lenin's Answer: "Your first question reminded me of a talk in London long, long ago. It was a Saturday evening about 20 years back. I was walking with a friend. The streets were extraordinarily animated. Everywhere along the streets the traders were lighting up their goods with small metal flare-lamps burning naphtha or something like it. The lights were very beautiful. The movement in the street was really extraordinary. Everybody was buying or selling.**

**"In Russia there was at that time a movement which we called The Economist. By this rather – [Here Lenin turns the tables on me by using a word which is not in the four-volume Dahl dictionary and which none of several Russian friends can translate] name we know a childish simplification of the views of the historical materialism of Marx. My friend was an 'Economist,' and busied himself at once in expounding his**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

wisdom. "Behold," said he, "on this extraordinary economic activity must follow a striving towards political power. I laughed at such an understanding of Marx. A multitude of small traders, and their very lively activity, does not in the very slightest bear witness to the great economic strength of a class, from which conclusions could and should be drawn concerning a striving to political power. Probably London grew up into a world power of trade, a power both economic and political, by a method somewhat more complicated than my companion imagined it and the street-trader of London, in spite of their formidable activity, were pretty far from political strength, and even from a striving towards it.

[next paragraph unreadable.]

**Question II. The Problem of Production.**

[Opening part is unreadable.]

[Continuation of answer to question two in next column.]

"You have the impression that in Russia at the present time buying, selling, and exchanges are highly profitable 'while production is possible only in the rarest cases.' [Lenin misread my question, which does not use the word "possible" but "profitable." – A. R.]

"I was much surprised to read of such a deduction from observation of the Moscow streets. But what, thought I, of the millions and millions of Russian peasants? The case of their sowing the ground, that is obviously not a rare case, certainly not one of the rarest, but is the case in the majority in Russia. A case even more numerous than the buying or selling of anything by a Nepmen. [Since Lenin cannot hit back again, it is perhaps unfair for me to point out that the Russian peasants are actually Nepmen, seeing that after paying the taxes they are allowed to sell their produce freely, and that they owe this freedom to the New Economic Policy. – A. R.] And probably peasant production in Russia is not only 'possible' but also highly 'profitable'. Otherwise, whence would come those hundreds of millions of poods of corn which our peasants have brought to the State so extraordinarily easily and quickly? Whence that general rise of building activity, both in the villages of boundless Russia and in the towns, which is observable by everyone and all?

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**"Is not he who puts such a question taking for ' highly profitable sale and exchange' the petty trade when a small trader gets sometimes millions and millions of profit in the falling Russian valuta, when the million on the open market is worth less than the rouble was formally? Such a mistake is hardly possible, for our State is now crossing out – for some months already it has been crossing out – the useless noughts on the paper money. Yesterday 1 trillion, but now 4 noughts are crossed out, and the result is 10 million. The State does not grow rich from this, what it would be strange to suppose that it should grow weaker, for a step forward towards the improvement of money is here obvious. The Nepmen begins to understand that the crossing out of noughts will go yet farther, and I scarcely think it is likely to be arrested by his ' striving after political power.'**

**"I return to production. With us land is in the hands of the State. The small peasants who possess it pay the tax excellently. Industrial production, so far as it concerns so-called light industry, is visibly reviving, and it is often either the property of the State, under the direction of its officials, or in the possession of lessees.**

**"Therefore there is no ground for fearing 'the steady weakening of the State.'**

**"One must draw a distinction not between production and trade but between production in light industry and production in heavy industry. This latter is actually unprofitable – hence, indeed, the difficult position of our State. Of this later."**

### **III.**

#### **Taxes And Industry.**

**Question III.: "It is suggested that an attempt will be made (by taxation) to make the Nepmen subsidize production. I asked, Will not the effect merely be to raise prices, raise Nepmen profits, indirectly compel a rise in wages, and so returned to the same position?"**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**Lenin's Answer: "There are hundreds of millions of poods of corn in the hands of the State. In such conditions to expect that taxes will 'merely' raise prices is impossible. Taxes will also give us a revenue from the Nepmen and from the producers for the help of industry, particularly for the help of heavy industry."**

### **IV.**

#### **Forward or Backward?**

**Question IV.: "Judging by ordinary capitalistic standards, the economic situation should be worse. Judging from Communist standards also, the situation should be worse (the decline of heavy industry). Yet every individual I meet admits that for him things are better than a year ago. It would seem that something is happening which is not allowed for by either capitalist or Communist ideology. Now both these assume progress. But what if, instead of progressing, we are retrogressing? I ask, Is it possible that we are not advancing towards a new state of well – being but returning towards an old one? Is it not possible that Russia is moving backwards towards a period of agricultural production about equal to her demands and of busy internal trade only slightly affected by foreign imports? Would it not be possible to conceive of such a period .under a proletarian dictatorship, as formally under a feudal dictatorship?"**

**Lenin's Answer: "Let us begin by considering things according to 'ordinary capitalist standards.' All this summer our rouble was stabilized. That is an obvious beginning of improvement. Then the undoubted revival of peasant production and of light industry. Also improvement. Finally our 'Gosbank' (State Bank) has received a clear revenue of not less than 20 million roubles in gold (that is a minimum estimate; in actual fact, more). Not much, but undoubtedly the beginning of the growth of a fund for heavy industry.**

**"Further, let us turn to consider things according to Communist standards. All the three circumstances already enumerated are pluses from the Communist point of view also, for, with us, the State authority is in the hands of the workers. The step towards the stabilization of the**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**rouble, the revival of production by the peasants and in light industry, and the beginning of profit for the State Bank (that is, for the State) – all these are plus from the Communist point of view also,**

**"How can it be that, while capitalism and Communism are opposite things, yet various circumstances count as plus from both opposite points of view? That is possible, for the transition of Communism is possible also through State capitalism if power in the State is in the hands of the working class. And this precisely is 'our present case.'**

**"The decline of heavy industry – that is our minus. But the beginning of revenue from the State Bank and from the Department of Foreign Trade is preparation for an improvement of the state of affairs in this branch also. The difficulties here are great, but the matter is by no means hopeless.**

**"Let us proceed. Can it not be that we are going backwards towards something or other in the way of a 'feudal dictatorship'? Nothing of the kind is possible, for slowly, with intervals, with steps backwards from time to time, we are lifting ourselves along the line of State capitalism. And this is a line leading us forward to Socialism and Communism (as the highest grade of Socialism) and not by any manner of means backward to feudalism.**

**"Foreign trade is growing; the stabilization of the rouble is growing stronger, though with intervals; the obvious revival of industry in Peter (Petrograd) and Moscow; the small, the very small beginning of the preparation of the State means for the assistance of heavy industry, and so forth. All this shows that Russia is going forward and not backward, although, I repeat, very slowly and with intervals.**

**V.**

**Question V. – "Or have we merely the sad spectacle of a squandering of capital that ought to be used in production?"**

**Lenin's Answer. – "To this question a reply has already been given by the preceding exposition."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **VI.**

#### **A Rumor Contradicted.**

**Question VI. – "Apart from these questions, I think the 'Manchester Guardian' would be interested to have from your lips a contradiction of the rumors now busily circulating in Moscow to the effect that the card system is to be reintroduced this winter together with wholesale requisition of the Nepmen's stores."**

**Lenin's Answer. – "I willingly confirm the complete lack of foundation for rumors to the effect that we are thinking of going back to the card system or to a wholesale requisition of the Nepmen's stores.'**

**"Pure fairy-tales! We are not dreaming of anything of the sort.**

**"Nor is it possible to imagine anything of the sort in contemporary Russia. These are rulers put about by malicious folk, who are very angry with us, but not very clever."**

### **VII.**

#### **The Urquhart Agreement.**

**Question VII. – "Lastly, am I right in assuming that the Urquhart Agreement is not finally rejected but merely pigeon – holed pending the establishment of normal friendly relations with the British Government?"**

**Lenin's Answer. – "You are absolutely right with regard to Urquhart. We have not finally rejected the Urquhart concession. We rejected it only for the political reasons pointed out by us in the press. We have begun in our press an open discussion of all the pros and all the contras. And we hope that after this discussion we shall form our final opinion both on political and on economic lines."**

## **VOLUME IV.**

### **DISPATCHES FOR 1923.**

**MG. January 5, 1923.**

**The Tsaritsa's Memoirs.  
Rasputin's Influence.  
Enmity Of The Tsar's Family.**

**Riga, December 17.**

**The second volume of the letters of the Empress of Russia has just been issued. Its political interest greatly surpasses that of the first volume. It is a picture of one of the most somber epics of Russian history.**

**There is the same accent of passionate love for her husband, but whereas politics rarely entered in the first series of letters, every letter now contains a request or suggestion of a political character. The Tsarina has become the counsellor of her husband in matters of government. Not a day passes but she tells him what he should or should not do, or tells them in detail what she has done herself, often without consulting him. The possibility that she might commit an error hardly occurs to her: to hesitate on the path she indicates would be a fatal error. If all does not go as she desires, it is not from any opposition of the Czar to her will but from his own deficient will – power, as he himself recognizes. She scolds him for that admission: "I will not have it said that my poor little old husband has no strength of will. That would kill me." She implores him to follow the example of Peter the Great or Ivan the Terrible, of Paul.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**In her eyes Nicholas II. had an exceedingly simple task: to obey blindly. She considered herself as the humble executrix of the Heavenly will, as revealed by the "man of God," Grigori Rasputin. She writes: "My soul, you will do well to follow the advice of Our Friend. He prayed so long for you through this night that he controlled your footsteps. Only be as convinced as I am, and all will be well." The mere presence of Rasputin is already a benediction, and if anyone begins to attack him "everything is going badly."**

**The principal condition for nomination to high office of State is devotion to Rasputin; she cannot work with anyone who is lacking in that. The next is to love herself and to be ready to follow her advice in everything. This, in her eyes, is the principal merit of Goremykin and Sturmer To fail to accomplish the desires of Rasputin is to be exposed to her wrath.**

**Sometimes it happened, however, that these partisans of Rasputin, once arrived at their high office, became his enemies, like Hvostov, who, having crawled before him, planned his assassination with the monk Iliodorus. The fault in this mistaken selection did not rest with the "man of God"; Rasputin had chosen well, but his nominees could not resist evil temptations.**

**The Empress knew that she was detested, and referred to the fact in her letters. The Czar's family were her enemies, and the nobles, and numbers of Ministers and Senators, even of the Right wing, and the Duma and various civil administrative bodies. She was not unaware that influential persons were talking of the necessity for her divorce from the Czar, after which she would be shut up in a nunnery. At bottom this atmosphere of enmity which she felt around her disturbed her little; she was convinced that she had the love of the Army and of the people. But to support her in this conviction she had only her necessarily restricted personal observation and some telegrams from the "Alliance of the Russian People" (the Black Hundreds).**

**For the rest her main preoccupation was to assure the triumph of Rasputin, without which "it would all be over." With him she was assured**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

of triumph over all enemies, at home and abroad, whatever trials fate might have in store. Her only anxiety was lest the Grand Duke Nicholas, the Duma, or some other body should steal the laurels of the Czar and Rasputin, and she worked to destroy the independence and influence of all but the creatures of the monk. Against his enemies or hers she never ceased to demand strong measures: hanging or exile to Siberia, banishment from the Court, or dismissal from their post. Her demands were usually in vain. Ministerial changes were frequent enough, but Puritchkevitch claims that they were not the work of the Empress. Her creatures, even the most devoted, remained but a very short time in power, when it became necessary, even at the request of Rasputin, to dismiss them. This was the fate of Goremykin and Sturmer.

The monk finally determined on the choice of Protopopoff for the accomplishment of his designs. The Czarina approved altogether, it was a specially subtle choice, for he belong to this Duma which she so hated. She hoped the choice would appease every malcontent. Not a letter passes but she writes of her hopes in him. But from the beginning of his Ministry he was struck with paralysis. Another Minister, Trepoff, referred to this, but at his first words she fired up at the "calumny," and refused to hear more. She writes: "At bottom Protopopoff does not matter: what matters is the monarchy itself and your prestige."

Suddenly, on December 17, the news came which crushed her. Rasputin had disappeared, without leaving a trace. "I cannot and will not believe that they have killed him. God will have pity on us. It would be an unbearable grief. I am quite calm, I cannot believe a thing like this." It is the last letter she wrote.

**MG. January 29, 1923.**

**Russia's Policy "Dictated By Peace Aims."  
Mr. Litvinoff On Proofs Of Soviet Sincerity.**

**Moscow, Saturday night.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**I have had a long talk with Mr. Litvinoff, who, during the absence of Mr. Chicherin at Lausanne has been head of the Russian Foreign Office. Since my arrival in Moscow I have heard much talk of the possibility of new European wars, and I asked Mr. Litvinoff his opinion on this, and for a statement on the Russian attitude towards Lausanne, on the events of the occupation of the Ruhr, and on the Memel revolt.**

**Mr. Litvinoff said: "Yes. If this were 1914, I would certainly say that we were on the eve of a European war. But that tremendous war is very recent, its lessons are still fresh, and we hope that all the Governments concerned have learnt them. We believe that revolution must result from the last European war. In that perhaps we were partially wrong, but it may be said with absolute certainty that the nations will not stand a repetition of it. We hope that the fear of revolution, if nothing else, will prevent the European Governments from precipitating a new catastrophe."**

**I said: "But why do you use the word "hope"? If a new war will bring revolution, it is difficult to understand why you, as a revolutionary Government, wish it, may be avoided."**

**Mr. Litvinoff replied: "This war will not be a revolutionary war. It will be a war of precisely the same character as the last, and we, on principle, must be against it. In war the working class will suffer most, and we, as a working – class Government, cannot but oppose it. Further, you must remember that we are not the Third International but the Russian Government, and though the Third International may hope to profit by circumstances likely to result in revolution, the Russian Government cannot welcome circumstances likely to have a harmful effect on slowly recovering Russian economy.**

**"Nor in this are the views of the Third International and the Government fundamentally opposed. We believe that the greatest service we can do to Communism is to strengthen Soviet Russia. That task was more important than all else, and, like the rest of Europe, we need peace for recovery.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

### **Why Russia Supported Turkey.**

**"In considering all your three questions – Lausanne, the Ruhr , and Memel – our attitude is incomprehensible unless you first understand our real fundamental reasons for desiring peace. Thus at Lausanne we wanted a real peace, not patched up, for which reason we supported Turkish interests, because so long as those interests are left unsatisfied lasting peace is impossible.**

**"With regard to the Straits, our attitude is dictated by the same desire for real peace. We have made our land frontiers safe. Even there we are trying to reduce expenditure by lessening the size of our army while improving its quality. Our sea frontiers are not safe. We have not money to do much for our fleet, and we would have liked to put money into economic improvement instead of being forced to spend on the navy. Both in the Baltic and the Black Sea we would support anything that would lead to the possibility of not spending money on the fleet. We are ready to support the neutralization of both these seas.**

**"With regard to the Black Sea, we have a right to be surprised at the English opposition to our wish to close the Straits to warships, because in old times that was precisely what England wanted. In those days Russia was aggressive and wished to send warships through the Dardanelles. The position now is reversed, and the only possible motive for wanting to send warships into the Black Sea is a desire to be able at a suitable moment to hold a pistol at Russia's throat by life-threatening the Black Sea coast. This belief of ours naturally is strengthened by the undoubted worsening of relations under the new English Government."**

**I asked: "What precisely do you mean by that?"**

**Mr. Litvinoff: "For one example, the Canadian Government, obviously under English influence, has refused to admit our trade mission, which they themselves had previously invited. For another example, take the difficulties put in the way of Anglo – Russian trade. Are you aware that England now refuses to admit Russian buyers and sellers,**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**representatives of our purely economic organizations, unless vouched for by the particular English firms, thereby committing them in advance to dealing with those particular firms?**

**The Ruhr: Our Sympathy is with Germany.**

**"Now with regard to the occupation of the Ruhr, our sympathy is with Germany, as it is with any oppressed nation. We, too, have suffered. We should have the same sympathy for France if France and not Germany were the victims. Under no circumstances should it be supposed that we are guided by any hostility to France, rapprochement with which country is one of our immediate objects. Remember, too, that Germany was first of all nations that wiped the old slate, and without conferences resumed normal relations with us.**

**"I solemnly affirm, by the way, that we have no secret military agreement with Germany, as has been alleged, nor have we any formal obligations to any country in the world other than in our published agreements. We regard the occupation of the Ruhr as a blow on convalescent Europe as a whole, and so on Russia, the reconstruction of which depends on peace in Europe – on normalcy, as the Americans say.**

**"The situation is threatening because France has allies in Eastern Europe who, by possible interference, might create a direct threat to their Eastern neighbors. We are consciously avoiding any step which might provoke our neighbors to military preparations. But we expect as much from them. That the blow affects us may be judged from the fact that our foreign trade is greater with Germany than with any other country.**

**The Memel Revolt.**

**"As for our attitude towards the Memel question, we are more friendly to Lithuania than to the other Baltic neighbors, because her national aspirations met with justice, and because she alone takes no part in plots against Russia, takes no part in continual conferences, the sole**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**object of which is a general struggle against Russian interests. The Lithuanian Delegation alone took an independent line at the Moscow Disarmament Conference, whereas the other Delegations acted less in their old interest than against ours. It never came into our heads to push Lithuania into the adventure, which is wholly contrary to our peace program. I decisively contradict all rumors of our influence in the Memel events. On the other hand, not long ago we told the Allies we wished to take part in the decision of the Memel question, which is of deeper economic significance for Russia than for Poland and the Allies. Our participation would have lent authority to the decision, and might have prevented the present incidents. Here, as at Lausanne, hostility to us is preventing a peaceful decision on an international question.**

**"We have given many proofs of our goodwill, and I can today inform you of yet another. We have just telegraphed to Mr. Chicherin authorizing him to state that Russia is prepared to give land for settlement by Armenians and the creation of new Armenian hearths to replace those of which that unfortunate people have been deprived. It should be evident that we can do more than most countries in the satisfactory solution of such questions."**

**MG. February 3, 1923.**

**Mr. Urquhart's Russian Concession.  
Signs Of Approaching Reconsideration.**

**Moscow, Friday.**

**A full page of the "Pravda" and the leading article are devoted to a reopening of the discussion of the Urquhart concession. It prints a long letter from Mr. Leslie Urquhart and the Russian reply, the general tendency of which suggests that the moment is approaching when the matter will be reconsidered.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**The "Pravda" says: "We think that Mr. Leslie Urquhart, after his unsuccessful excursion in the alien region of polemics and discussions of general principles, will again count up all the pros and contras on the basis of our new offers, and perhaps in the long run he will find those conditions of concession which will be acceptable and sufficiently profitable also for the Soviet Government."**

**MG. February 3, 1923**

**Help The Russians To Help Themselves.**

**Dr. Nansen's Advice.**

**The Question Of Corn Exports.**

**Moscow, Friday.**

**I talked to Dr. Nansen on his return from the Ukraine. Discussing the fact that Russia is exporting corn while relief is still needed, Dr. Nansen pointed out that industrial countries cannot cease to export because some of the population are barefooted and badly housed. Such an apparent contradiction is economically inevitable.**

**"Russia needs money very badly," said Dr. Nansen. "Her taxes are paid in corn, and she must convert some of that corn tax into money in order to buy necessities. That does not affect the essential fact that in some areas Russians are still hungry, although I believe that Russia has turned the corner."**

**Dr. Nansen is looking with dismay at the events in Central Europe. He says: "The moment may come when Europe will need help from Russia – not the other way about."**

**He is persuaded that the most useful kind of help both for Russia and, in the long run, for the benefit of Europe is the development of Russia's powers of agricultural production. "The danger is that simply feeding people makes them inclined to sit down with folded hands waiting for**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**the foreigners to feed them again. It is far better to help them to feed themselves."**

**The peasants cannot afford to buy horses or agricultural machinery, and the Nansen organization is about to equip, as an experiment, two stations which will lend horses, tractors, etc., on the understanding that the peasants will pay when the harvest comes. A new agreement was signed today between the Russian Government and the Nansen organization, framed to permit its extension to cover transactions with foreign manufacturers of agricultural machinery, who may adopt this method of giving credit directly to the working peasants.**

**MG. February 10, 1923.**

**Russia And The Straits.**

**M. Litvinoff's View Of Neutralization.**

**Moscow, Friday.**

**I have asked Mr. Litvinoff whether by neutralization of the Black Sea and the Baltic the Russian Government means also demilitarization, and have received from him the following reply: –**

**"Neutralization implies demilitarization to an extent dependent on the value of the guarantees given by the Powers safeguarding neutrality, the closure of the Straits to warships, and peaceful relations."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. February 19, 1923.**

**Interview With Kamenev.  
Berlin's "Cowardice" After Genoa.  
Russia Recovering.  
A Tilt At Lord Curzon.  
"Still Living In The 19th Century."**

**Moscow, Sunday.**

**During Lenin's illness Kamenev is acting chairman of the Council of Peoples Commissars while retaining his position as president of the Moscow Soviet. During Lenin's recent period of recovery he referred to Kamenev's double task and said "The old horse turned out to be exceptionally capable," whereupon the caricaturists amused themselves with pictures of Kamenev harnessed to the Kremlin and the Moscow Soviet building, tugging both along the road.**

**I visited him today at the Moscow Soviet building where last I saw him in February, 1919. He referred to that meeting and I asked him what, for Russia, was the fundamental difference between then and now. "The essential difference is that then it was war, now it is peace," he replied.**

**"How long do you think peace will last?"**

**"So far as we are concerned," said Kamenev, "we shall do our utmost to make it last forever. You will have noticed other differences. Russia was then with her back to the wall and none but revolutionary methods were possible. Now we are living in a period when purely revolutionary methods are impossible. Russia is slowly recovering her well – being. The tempo of events is slow but the face of recovery is obvious. That recovery is our most important task and our difficulties now are not military but financial. Even in finance recovery is visible in the future. If we can only preserve peace and have normal harvest I think it is possible that Keynes's seemingly paradoxical prophecy may be realized and that**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Russia sooner than the rest of Europe will definitely stabilize her finances."**

**If Poland Mobilized.**

**"What do you think it possible that Russia can be forced to fight?" I asked.**

**Kamenev replied: "Events in Western Europe are certainly threatening, but whether we become involved depends entirely on Poland. We should have to consider Polish mobilization a hostile act."**

**"Even if directed against Germany?"**

**Kamenev: "Even so, it would in the long run be directed against us."**

**"Do you attach significance to the report that the French are using Polish workmen In the Ruhr?"**

**Kamenev: "I should think Poland has certain obligations to France, but she might well send workmen to the Ruhr without joining France in any military adventure. The present position in Poland encourages us to think that the Polish Government will not take the risk of any breach of peace. Polish policy, while strengthening the centripetal tendencies of the outlying parts of the old Russian Empire, strengthens the centrifugal tendencies of the non— Polish parts of the Polish State. Compare Poland with Austria. Austria at least had a tradition and represented a cultural level above that of her subject races. Poland is without tradition, and none of the subject minorities recognized any Polish superiority."**

**"The Polish Government, "he proceeded, "hangs on a delicate balance determined by minorities. In such circumstances it is doubtful if any Polish Government would dare to submit the country to such a strain as that involved in an unnecessary war. Then, with regard to France, unless the Bloc National is desperately throwing one card on the table after another it is difficult not to believe that they will be brought to their senses in time."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **Rapprochement with France.**

**Referring to the rumors recently current, I asked Kamenev if there were any signs of coming rapprochement with France.**

**Kamenev said: "Not yet, but it is a question only of time until France is forced to realize the truth of Jean Jaures's prophecy. Jean Jaures pointed out that in view of many circumstances, including the falling birth – rate, which cannot be raised by any militaristic method, France can only retain her position as a leading nation by giving up military ambitions and contenting herself with moral leadership. She is far enough from this at present, but sooner or later wiser folk in France will gain enough support to make an end of a policy which at the bottom is dictated by sheer fright."**

**I asked whether the Rapallo Treaty had given the results hope from it.**

**Kamenev: "It might have given far greater results but for the cowardice of the German Government and the German Social Democrats. On the other hand, all our people returning from Germany – not Communist only, but actors of the Art Theater, professors, etc. – bring the same story of friendly feeling towards us, the feeling that they in Germany are oppressed from the west, and that in their rear they have a friendly nation which is known similar oppression."**

**I referred to the rumors of a change of Japanese policy in connection with Joffre's visit to Japan.**

**Kamenev replied: "Joffre went to Japan not on a Government invitation but on that of several public bodies. He was very well received there. You know we have a greater revolutionary experience than any other nation, and we are persuaded that Japan stands much where Russia stood in 1903 – on the eve of events of great social and political significance, when a complete change of policy is not at all out of the question."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**"What significance," I asked, "do you attach to the alleged dismissal of Kavakami, the Japanese Minister at Warsaw, who on the way home via Moscow talked of the evacuation of Sakhalien?"**

**"That is merely a sign of instability," replied Kamenev. "Remember how here Plehve, Sviatopolk- Mirsky, Trepov, and Durnovo succeeded each other. With regard to Sakhalien We are absolutely unshakable, and we are convinced that in the not distant future those circles in Japan will be in power who favor rapprochement with Russia and the evacuation of Russian Sakhalien, which is the preliminary condition."**

### **Anglo – Russian Relations.**

**Kamenev turned finally to Anglo – Russian relations, which he said were distinctly worst under the new Government. "Lord Curzon seems unable to apply to the international affairs of today any but the ideology of the 19th century. For him it is as if nothing had happened since the days when Russia and England were at each other's throats over the partition of the East. That game is played out, but Lord Curzon is still playing it, though his opponent is no longer there. Lord Curzon is dreaming of cutting off Russia from the East altogether. That policy failed in 1919 when the English were at Archangel and Baku. It is impossible today, and it is difficult to understand why Lord Curzon has returned to so outworn a policy.**

**"Mr. Lloyd George, on the other hand," Kamenev went on, "did seem to have a misty, troubled vision of the altered circumstances. I am not moved by any personal bias in favor of Mr. Lloyd George, for you remember his treatment of me when he accused me of selling diamonds, as if he was not perfectly aware that if the Russian Government needed to sell diamonds it would not have used me for such a purpose. If he wanted to get rid of me he really need not have descended to use dirty gossip of the police station. However, that is an old story, and I cannot help admitting that Mr. Lloyd George realized he was living in the 20th century, though he had not always the courage to make the necessary deductions and act on them.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**"Lord Curzon, on the other hand, is determined that if this is not the 19th century world he will behave as if it were, with the unfortunate results that our relations, being those of outward politeness and inward hostility, do not ease the mutual trust of economic reconstruction."**

**I asked "Would you care to say anything on the subject of the Urquhart Agreement?"**

**Kamenev replied: "The Agreement depends upon the British Government and Mr. Urquhart himself. If he makes serious proposals nothing has happened to prevent agreement at any time. If he prefers to write articles like that we printed in the "Pravda," well, we are all journalist and are ready to break lances with him."**

**MG. February 22, 1923.**

**Russia's Outlook After Lausanne.**

**British "Hostility."**

**Scheme For Black Sea Neutralization.**

**Explanation By Chicherin.**

**Moscow, Tuesday.**

**Mr. Chicherin received me this morning and, walking up and down his room, summarized his impressions of Lausanne and the present phase of Anglo – Russian relations. "I am glad," he said, "of an opportunity to give you detailed information on the vexed question of the Russian attitude towards the neutralization of the Black Sea. The truth is that when I went to Lausanne we were ready to make, among other concessions, far-going proposals in this direction provided we had real security that foreign warships would not enter the Black Sea. Unfortunately, however, there were no real negotiations with our delegation, as I explained with full detail at the last meeting of the Straits Commission."**

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**"Our first exposition of our scheme was rejected without any attempt at negotiating. Our later counter – proposal of a Straits Convention was dismissed by Lord Curzon in a few words, and when I answered by pointing out that we had entered the path of concession this indication remained without response, and Lord Curzon made no attempt to seek compromise with us. We therefore had no opportunity of treating the question of the reduction of armaments in the Black Sea.**

**"At the same time I must point out that the constant hostility manifested by the British delegation towards Russia made obvious to everyone in Russia that we had to face very serious danger on our coasts. It was manifested that we could not disarm in the Black Sea when a perpetual menace of hostility by the greatest naval Power was overhanging our shores.**

### **Foreign Office Hostility Now Unrestrained.**

**"We are partisans of complete universal naval disarmament. I said officially in my official declaration at the Conference that we considered universal naval disarmament as the ideal and the only possible final settlement of the Straits question. In a special declaration annexed to our counter – project we declared our readiness to come to an agreement with the riparian States of the Black Sea about reduction of armaments if the Straits should be closed to foreign warships, and in that case we should have made the greatest possible concessions to our neighbors, while taking into consideration the fact that naturally we should be unable completely to disarm ourselves as long as the Straits might be forced by a hostile fleet.**

**"I must say in general that I and all my colleagues of the Russian Government have been much saddened by the effect of the Lausanne Conference on our relations with Britain. We saw that the British delegation pursued a policy that must necessarily alienate Russia. The systematic elimination of the Russian delegation from real negotiations on the Straits question; the absolute absence of any attempt to come to an agreement with Russia; the obdurate maintenance of those elements in the British proposals which seemed to us to mean not merely passive**

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**but also aggressive hostility to Russia – all this convinced us that lack of friendship in the British Foreign Office towards us was no longer restrained by wiser councils in Downing Street.**

**"It is most deplorable that at this moment of chaos, when agreements between Britain and Russia could have contributed much towards European peace, the attitude of the British Foreign Office makes impossible any realization of such perspectives. It is of melancholy importance of Russia and her allies in their foreign policy will have to take into consideration this attitude of the British Foreign Office as one of the determining elements in the world situation.**

**"European peace is still the fundamental aim in our policy, as witness our identical Notes of the 17th to the Polish and Lithuanian Governments, in which we propose to contribute, alone or in concert with other impartial Governments, towards the peaceful settlement of the demarcation line. We consider the maintenance of peace in Eastern Europe vital to the interest of Russia.**

### **Peace and Business.**

**"Our peace policy is determined by, among other things, the needs of economic reconstruction. For this reason the Ruhr policy of France has a deplorable repercussion here by lessening the possibility of economic help and the influx of capital from Western Europe, which is already gravely weakened.**

**"Let me assure you once again that there are no secret clauses in the agreement between Russia and Germany. Our relations with the German Government are absolutely free from any aggressive element. They are penetrated by a spirit of profound friendliness which is completely compatible with our desire for friendship with all other Powers. The attitude of the British Foreign Office is the more strange at a period when our situation in the world is rapidly improving, the latest example being the very friendly reception of our Peking representative in Tokyo, a fact**

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**which shows that the moment for the reestablishment of good relations with Japan is drawing definitely nearer."**

**MG. March 13, 1923.**

**Russia And The Ruhr Invasion.  
The Smell Of Powder.**

**Riga, March 1.**

**In Latvia and Estonia the French invasion of the Ruhr was taken by many to be an event that dictated an immediate tightening up of the relations between the Baltic States. It was thought that it brought definitely nearer a conflict in which those States which stand a chance of being trampled underfoot. The estimate of the force of the blow may have been exaggerated. The estimate of the direction of that force was accurate enough. The blow was immediately felt in Russia and when I reached Moscow I found there a feeling that war was in the air, a feeling which during the ensuing weeks gradually relaxed until it was almost as if it had not been. But at the first moment the feeling was there, as it was immediately after the Sarajevo murder in 1914. With another blow of the same kind the feeling will be there again. With repeated blows that "smell of powder," which people gloomily remarked, will become overwhelming and not to be dissipated without explosion.**

**"There is certainly a smell of powder," said a member of the Revolutionary War Council of the Republic with whom I spent a night in the train, "but I do not think there will be war this time. We at least do not want it, and it is hard to believe that they are really such idiots as to cook up a new war for themselves before they have recovered from the last." "They," of course, were the outer world, France, Poland, that Europe of which no Russian speaks as if his country were a part of it. It did not for a moment occur to him that Russia might initiate war on her own account. I purposely put that point to him, and he replied by pointing out that by treaty after treaty the Russian Government has shown its**

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**willingness to make very great sacrifices for the sake of peace. At the same time he said that there was no doubt that the seizure of German towns by Frenchmen far away there by the banks of the Rhine has had that curious effect of bringing the smell of powder into the Moscow atmosphere.**

### **Russia and Western Europe.**

**Five years ago that would certainly not have been so. Ruhr events which have been recorded simply as new proof of the madness of those whose destruction had been prophesied by Marx and clearly was preparing by the gods. Moscow would not have felt itself immediately concerned. But these last five years of stable government have inevitably altered the Russian outlook on the affairs of Western Europe. The Revolutionaries are no longer isolated. They are resuming relations with the outer world, and in so far they are, like any other European Power, affected by European events. Yet the manner in which those events affect them is not quite the manner in which they affect other States. There is a fundamental difference in their diagnosis of the general situation. Other States work on the supposition that things will settle until something like the old equilibrium of interests and tensions is restored. The rulers of Moscow are, on the other hand, persuaded that the old economic system is crumbling and that its decay and fall must be accompanied by violent revolutionary crises. In these crises they expect to be involved. At the same time they are in command of a country which, seeing that it most urgently needs foreign assistance, needs peace in Europe. Hitherto they have never hesitated in sacrificing the immediate interests of revolutionaries anywhere if that meant making peace instead of making war. They have always explained that they did this because Soviet Russia needed peace and because the preservation and strengthening of Soviet Russia were more important, even from a revolutionary point of view, than local and perhaps temporary victories. It is of some importance to determine at what moment peace as a desideratum for Russia will cease to outweigh for the Russian Communist all other considerations. There are those who say that the moment could never come. It seems to me that the coming or delay of that moment must depend on two factors: (1) what a peaceful Europe**

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**promises Russia and (2) what Russia at peace can promise to herself. Not until the sum of these promises is a negative quantity will Russia sacrifice the prestige of her pacifism in a world seething with quarrels.**

**Hitherto there have been considerable promises under both of these headings, but it is just possible that a time is coming when that will be no longer so. For all their belief in the eventual collapse of capitalism the Russians have cherished the hope that in the meantime economic collaboration with the rest of Europe is not only desirable but possible. A good deal is happening to make an end of that hope. Suppose for a moment that the grudging half – peace between England and Russia continued to be comparatively barren of practical results, Russia can look only to Germany or to America, and America is very far away and not even as friendly as England. But suppose, further, that it should become clear that France is attempting to damage Germany as to destroy all hopes of practical result from the Treaty of Rapallo, the whole object of which, for Russia, is German cooperation in Russian reconstruction. Suppose France should call upon the Poles to help her, so that Russia would once more be cut off from Western Europe by a line of campfires. In such a state of affairs as that Russia would have to do what she could to weaken of the attack on German industry (Germany as Germany is a matter of no interest to her present rulers), or to make up her mind to do without foreign help of any kind. Though the Russians do not want war, it seems clear that in such circumstances the hopes they have been basing on peace would have been utterly destroyed.**

### **A Revolutionary Theorists Views.**

**On the other hand, the events of the Ruhr have raised once more hopes of the revolutionary by-products of a new European struggle. Beside that smell of powder in the air was a renewed confidence in the revolutionary diagnosis of the ills of Europe. Latterly there had been a feeling that Europe was really settling down to lick her wounds, and that, weakened strain as it was, the "capitalist system" was to recover for a considerable period. It had become hard to believe in the old revolutionary theses after so long a series of disappointments. Remember only that in 1914 Lenin believed that the world war would end**

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**the world of revolution, that in the autumn of 1918 there was a Soviet in Berlin, that in the spring of 1919 they were still sure that final demobilization could not be survived by the fighting Powers, who would be unable to find work for the returning troops, and then that during the last four years they have seen in one country after another the economic barometer rising and the political thermometer returning to normal. It had really looked as though the reparation question might be peaceably settled and the jig saw puzzle of opposing interests fitted together once more into a comparatively stable picture. Then Mussolini showed that equilibrium was not yet, and that a great European country could still change its face in a week. And now the Ruhr. Bucharin rang me up on the telephone with almost impish exultation. "Well," said he, "remember what I told you about Europe in 1919. Just look at it. Was I right or was I not?"**

**Bucharin, of course, is not a member of the Government, is free from any responsibilities of statesmanship, and looks at things exclusively from the point of view of a revolutionary theorist. To get a true idea of opinion of Moscow it is as well to set Bucharin's views, concerned before all with the revolutionary by – products of events, beside the views of Litvinov, Chicherin, Kamenev, and Trotsky, who speak for the Russian Government. Talking to the Press Workers Congress, Bucharin said: "The Ruhr events are undoubtedly a proof that Europe has entered upon a phase of its development more catastrophic than that of the last few months. They have profoundly shaken up all that seem to be settling down in the relations between States and between various social forces in Europe. We, in contradistinction to a whole series of bourgeois imperialistic optimist, showed that the peace concluded after the world war would inevitably be torn up by the march of events. Certain historical zigzags, certain historical twisting's and turnings there have been, but we have unconditionally proved to be right." Further: "The imperialist war of 1914 was carried through under an extraordinarily powerful ideological covering. A whole literature, forming a tremendous instrument of capital, was occupied in proving how idealist were the aims of the war. We orthodox Marxist, had to use complex argumentation to prove that the imperialist Powers were moved by economic interests. But here, in the events of the Ruhr, we see an**

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**absolutely uncovered, naked interest, to be reckoned in tons of coal, in square meters of someone else's territory, or in the amount of gold metal France was to get by the Versailles Treaty. The Ruhr events make an end of the illusions of 1914.... We ought to be grateful to M. Poincare."**

### **The Chance of War.**

**But what do they think is actually going to happen? Bucharin sees four possibilities: (1) The French become persuaded that the operation of the Ruhr is unprofitable and cover their defeat with a compromise. (2) German industry, with the exception of the very largest firms, which alone are able to import English coal, is unable to hold out. The result is a schism in the German bourgeoisie, and so the attempt to resist the French fails. (3) A mutual compromise between French and German capital. (4) Increasing exasperation ending in war with France and the attempted occupation of Germany.**

**There, I think, Bucharin's views coincide with those of the Soviet Government, and the reason why during the last three weeks war has seemed less likely is that all information reaching Moscow from the Ruhr has tended to suggest that the outcome of, the invasion is to be one of the first three of those outlined by Bucharin. Belief has steadily grown that in some way or other the French and the Germans will temporarily come to terms. In that case, according to the Moscow theorists, the struggle will be at least postponed. Only in the case of the fourth possibility will it be upon us almost immediately. If, as at the first moment seemed inevitable, French occupation drives the Germans into such opposition as was shown to themselves in their occupation of the Ukraine in 1918, then the curtain may rise on a terrific the panorama of war and civil war, interacting on each other, from one end of Europe to the other. The French will need more and more troops and will call on the Poles. If the Poles move Russia will move also. Meanwhile the German Empire falls into pieces divided against each other. Other nations will follow the French and Polish examples and seize whatever Ruhrs and Vilnas they may covet. The Balkan States will be at each other's throats and uproariously revising the present forms of government. These are the perspectives the thought of which brought**

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**with such suddenness that smell of powder into the air in Moscow. They promise any quantity of revolutionary by-products, but the rulers of Russia, nonetheless, would do much to avoid them. They have not yet wholly lost hope of economic reconstruction with European aid. Their country is only now taking breath after the long years of war and civil war. At the same time no Russian Government could, in the present circumstances, faced with equanimity either the prospect of Germany's complete destruction or the prospect of a further increase of Polish territory, no matter at whose immediate expense. It is not to make the conflict more likely but in the attempt to avoid it that they have tried to make it clear alike to France and to Poland that they consider themselves directly concerned.**

**MG. March 16, 1923.**

**Russia & The Urquhart Agreement.  
Standing Out For Better Terms.**

**Riga, March 3.**

**When I last saw Pyatakoy he was engaged in the organization of guerrilla warfare in the Ukraine and had just received the news of his brothers being flogged or otherwise tortured to death. That was nearly 5 years ago. The other day I found him sitting in a neat office, half a score of typist in a room round the corner, and the walls of his office were covered with maps not illustrating the concentrations of hostile forces but the areas of Russian wealth. He is chairman of the Concession Committee, which works in what is known as Gosplan (Gosudarstvenny, or State Plan Department). Here is decided in what areas it is advisable to grant concessions, and here conditions for these concessions are worked out in detail. It has always been a place of great hope and very enjoyable labor, where it is possible to forget the difficulties of the present in the drawing of charts and the making of calculations that illustrate the delightful possibilities of the future.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**I asked Pyatakov first if any English concessions in Russia were actually being worked. He told me of the "Russo-Anglo Les" (Russian English Timber Company) and the Russo – Holland Les, the first of which is an example. These concessions were confirmed in the summer of 1922. They began purely trade business with existing stocks of material at once, and are now working with a view to the export of new stuff next year. "The Russian English Timber Company," said Pyatakov, "shows very well how it is possible for foreign capitalists to work together with the Soviet Government. It is a joint – stock company the shares in which are divided between the Russian Government, represented by Severo Les (Northern Forests), and two English companies, in which are represented the former owners. It will be remembered that when the timber trade with Russia reopened after the Revolution there were difficulties concerning the export of material already prepared and bearing the marks of the former owners. In this concession that difficulty has been avoided. The former owners have been allowed to bring such material as was on the spot into the new company by way of capital, getting shares in exchange. Nor have there been any difficulties in the working of this arrangement. When the question arose as to whether the offices were to be in England or in Russia we left it to the English, who, after at first deciding to have the head office in London, are now considering whether it will not be better to bring it over here."**

**He then spoke of the kind of concessions in which the Soviet Government sees a more definite and real advantage to Russia. "We," he said, "are more interested in concessions the effect of which will be the opening up of new sources of wealth than in those which concern the use of already existing works or material close at hand. People who are willing to develop Russia's potential resources will naturally be given the greatest privileges and every possible assistance." He spoke of an oil concession in the neighborhood of Batoum which is now under discussion.**

### **The Urquhart Negotiations.**

**I asked him then what was the actual situation with regard to the Urquhart agreement.**

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**"Negotiations with Urquhart are being renewed," he said, "if, indeed, they have ever been broken off. He, however, insists on getting the original agreement in its original form. We, on the other hand, want two main alterations, neither of which should trouble Urquhart if he really wants to work the concession and is not merely intending to play with shares. The first is an increase in the productive program. We do not want an impossible increase, but merely one sufficient to ensure that the concessions shall be properly worked. The second alteration concerns the coal pocket of Ekibastus . The coal in these regions is in various isolated spots, and the coal lake or pocket at Ekibastus,, the rights to the whole of which are wanted by Urquhart, is precisely the source of supply that will be necessary for the feeding of our proposed new Siberian railway. We cannot let him have the whole of it without putting our future railway entirely under his control. We want an agreement whereby one – third of the Ekibastus coal output comes to the Soviet Government, or an agreement whereby Urquhart binds himself to supply us with coal. We see no reason why he should not agree to this. His concession is an exceptionally favorable one, and is different from all others in that we actually pay him a very large sum of money."**

**"How was it that Krassin passed the agreement as it was?"**

**"He must have overlooked these points. I personally, while very much in favor of the Urquhart concession in principle, most strongly opposed the ratification of the agreement in its original form. I hope that in a slightly altered form the agreement will presently be concluded. If Urquhart, for reasons of his own, is obdurate, we can wait. He gains nothing by waiting, and we lose nothing, whereas if he waits long enough we shall eventually be able to do for ourselves the work for which we are prepared to pay him so highly."**

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**MG. May 9, 1923.**

**Ten Days Ultimatum To Soviet.**

**Britain Threatens To Abandon Trade Agreement.**

**Sharp Protest Against Shipping Seizures And Hostile Propaganda.**

**"Unconditional" Satisfaction Demanded.**

**Effect Of The Note In Moscow.**

**Moscow, Wednesday Morning.**

**Mr. Hodgson at 1:30 yesterday delivered a British ultimatum to the Russian Government demanding a satisfactory reply within 10 days if the British were not to consider themselves "immediately free from the obligation" of the trade agreement.**

**I saw various members of the Russian Government this afternoon who protest because the demands are put in the form of an ultimatum. Some of the demands present small difficulty. Even before the receipt of this ultimatum the Russians had ordered the release of the captain and crews of the trawlers, who are believed to be free already, and have ordered the whole case to be retried in Moscow, where they say the Court will be less actuated by the local feeling of the coast, and will be more favorably inclined towards British fishermen.**

**They also declared their readiness to discuss the as yet unregulated question of a three or twelve mile fishing limit. Other demands were said to "go very far indeed," and the fact that all together were put in the form of an ultimatum increased the difficulty of a situation already critical.**

**The Russians are considering their reply, but say it is unlikely to be ready before the end of the week.**

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### **Summary Of The Note.**

**The British Note to the Soviet Government concludes with the following threat to break off existing relations between the two countries: –**

**"Unless within 10 days of the receipt of the above communication by the, Commissariat for Foreign Affairs the Soviet Government has undertaken to comply fully and unconditionally with the request which it contains, his Majesty's Government will recognize that the Soviet Government does not wish the existing relations between them to be maintained. In that case his Majesty's Government will, in view of the manifest infringement of the Trade Agreement by the Soviet Government, consider themselves immediately free from the obligation of that agreement."**

**The British Government demands an apology for and the cessation of Soviet anti-British propaganda and hostile action, particularly in the East – evidence in support of its existence being quoted, – and the recall of the officials responsible. Among the most notorious bases has always been the area which comprises Persia, Afghanistan, and the Indian border, while the Russian Minister at Teheran is described as "the most tireless operator in this field."**

### **Shipping Offenses.**

**The British Government demands the admission of liability by the Soviet Government and the undertaking to pay compensation in the case of British subjects who have been maltreated in Russia (the execution of Mr. C. F. Davison and the imprisonment of Mrs. Stan Harding being cited as examples); and insist that British fishing vessels must not be interfered with in future outside the three-mile limit, that the trawlers James Johnson and St. Hubert be released, as well as the crew of the former, and that compensation be paid to the owners and relatives for the loss of the trawler magenta and the death of the crew.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**"It is time," the Note says, "that the Soviet Government should be made aware that it cannot with impunity behave towards British subjects and British shipping in this arbitrary and intolerable manner.**

### **M. Weinstein And the Religious Trials.**

**The British Government further demands the unequivocal withdrawal of the two offensively worded communications signed by M. Weinstein in reply to the British representations regarding the condemned Roman Catholic priest. Regarding the question of religious persecution itself, the Note says: –**

**"His Majesty's Government have refrained from expressing an opinion about the nature or validity of the charges brought against these ecclesiastics [Archbishop Cziepliak and Mgr. Butkevitz]. No attempt however, is made in Russia itself to deny that these prosecutions and executions are part of a deliberate campaign undertaken by the Soviet Government with the definite object of destroying all religion in Russia and enthroning the image of godlessness in its place."**

**Concluding its complaint against M. Weinstein's "unexplained, irrelevant, and insulting", Notes, the British Government says it seems difficult to arrive at any other conclusion than that the Soviet Government are either convinced that the British Government will accept any insult sooner than break with Soviet Russia, or the Soviet itself desires to bring the relations created by the Trade Agreement to an end.**

**MG. May 11, 1923.**

### **How Russians Read The Ultimatum.**

**Moscow, Friday Morning.**

**The tone and character of the Russian reply to the British ultimatum is still undecided, and it is difficult to forecast, not because the Russians**

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wish to break with England, but because they are inclined to think from the tone of the English Note and the nature of the demands, most of all from the sudden sending of such a Note during the discussion on the trawler question before the last more conciliatory Russian Note had had time to reach England, that the British Note marks a definite decision to cancel the Trade Agreement.

If the British Note had ended on a firm demand for better behavior instead of in an actual ultimatum the position would be more hopeful. As it is, the Russians are inclined to feel that even a conciliatory reply which should not satisfy in full all the British demands (and this it is widely felt cannot be done without sacrificing the dignity of a new and consequently sensitive State) will merely expose them to the humiliation of having yielded in vain.

There is a noticeable tendency to argue that, since the ultimatum is intended to force a break, it would be taken as a sign of weakness to attempt conciliation. Litvinoff's long Note in reply on the trawler question is published today, but the English ultimatum is still unpublished, and Stekloff's leading article in the "Izvestia" discusses it as if on the basis of English newspaper comment and as if he himself had not seen it. His article confirms the view set out above, since he points out that a break with Russia is a natural corollary of Lord Curzon's tendency to narrow and simplify British – Russian relations to those of traditional hostility in the East; and, further, he takes the line that a break is predetermined and is dictated, like the old interventionist policy, by a mistaken belief in Russia's weakness.

His article, however, is not necessarily significant of more than the existence of a belief that Lord Curzon is resolved to break. It does not prove that this belief will overrule the very strong desire on the Russian side to avoid what would on the face of it be a retrograde step towards the conditions of 1919.

Few seem to think that the cancellation of the Trade Agreement would lead to immediate war, although non-Russians here suggest that it would signify for smaller nations that in Eastern Europe English policy has

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surrendered to French, and would consequently induce a new feeling of insecurity in smaller countries and everywhere strengthen those military parties which during the last two years have been noticeably weakening. I believe that the full text of the British Note will appear in tomorrow's papers. Hitherto, though everybody is talking of it, few know the actual terms.

**MG. May 12, 1923**

**How Russia Will Reply.**

**Pacific Effort.**

**Convinced Of British Hostility.**

**Krassin Coming To London To Wind – Up.**

**Moscow, Friday.**

The British Note is published in full in today's paper without comment of any kind. The Political Bureau is now sitting discussing the draft of the reply, which will probably be delivered tomorrow.

It is perfectly clear that the Russians do not want to break off relations, but are finding it difficult to reply on account of their general belief that the Note has been framed in order to make a rupture inevitable.

Many points in the propaganda indictment, they say, are based either on half – truths or untrustworthy information. They point out, for example, Raskolnikov's report about help with 3000 roubles and 10 boxes of cartridges. There is here a partial truth in that he did refer to that sum and to that minute quantity of munitions, but he referred not to Russian activities but to the almost comical ineffective efforts of others. They say, how can they be asked to admit without argument indictments of this kind?

Further, they say that it is unfair to assume that pro--Russian propaganda is necessarily anti-- British when they do not claim that pro--English

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**propaganda in Afghanistan, for example, is anti— Russian in the sense intended by the trade agreement.**

**With regard to paragraph 12 of the British Note Zinoviev says that the Third International has not had such sums at its disposal, and adds that there is no Indian Communist Party other than a very small group. With regard to the cases of Davison and Mrs. Harding, the Russians point out that both these cases occurred before the signing of the trade agreement, and that there are no cases afterwards. They think that compensation for cases that occurred before the trade agreements should be reciprocal, claiming that Russian subjects suffered in various parts of the world during a period when there were no regular relations and when Russians and British alike crossed the frontier at their own risk.**

**With regard to the trawlers, the Russians will probably propose a conference and release the ships, otherwise confirming the long Note on this particular subject which had been already handed in when our ultimatum was delivered. Finally, the British Government will be asked to consider the Weinstein letters annulled.**

**I am assured that the tone of the Note will not be acrimonious but the reverse, and that it will be such as to make possible a continuance of relations. At the same time the belief in official quarters here is that the rupture is already decided. Krassin, with two assistants, leaves today for London by airplane for the winding up of business.**

**MG. May 14, 1923. #1**

**Demonstrations In Moscow.**

**"Russia Not A Ruhr."**

**Defiance Without Bad Temper.**

**British Mission Looks On.**

**Moscow, Sunday.**

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**The papers today are full of resolutions passed in the factories almost without exception referring to the tone of the British Note. Such sentences as "Russia is not a British colony and Curzon shall not make us lick the boots of British Imperialist," "Russia is not the Ruhr, and they are not masters in our house" are frequently heard.**

**There are demonstrations all over the town today, but no demonstration could be very resentful or angry on the first warm summer day of the year. The people, indeed, were as good tempered as at the Lord Mayors Show. Even those of the demonstrators who carried banners protesting against Fascism and the murder of Vorowsky were unable to resist the sunshine, and the funeral march presently was forgotten in more cheerful choruses. That does not mean that Vorowsky's murder has not produced a most painful impression. It simply means that it was the first day of summer, and it was impossible to walk about the streets and be unhappy.**

**Besides, there was much that was amusing for the demonstrators. Some of them were making great play with the effigies of well-known European statesmen—M. Poincare, for example, who was to be seen with a distended mouth into what he had got one end of an enormous German sausage labeled "Ruhr." I saw a lorry on which had been rigged up a cage, as of a traveling menagerie, full of British lions and other fine and rampant creatures duly labeled. There was a huge Fascist doll in a black shirt, which wagged its head, arms, and legs as it was carried along.**

**Lord Curzon appeared in many incarnations. On one lorry he was fishing. On another he was holding captive a number of Eastern peoples. The young man who played this part was unlucky, because near the Art Theater a number of real Hindoos pulled him down from the lorry and beat him with a certain amount of vim, which increased when he tried to defend himself. The demonstration of Eastern peoples, by the way, was the only one which looked ugly. The utmost good humor prevailed everywhere else.**

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### **Rush at British Mission.**

**Precautions have been taken to prevent demonstrations reaching the British Mission. Cavalry patrols have been out since early morning, and the demonstrators coming from the center of the town were stopped near Arbat Square. One demonstration of about 250 people coming from the other end of Povarskaya Street approached the Mission and pushed past a dozen or so cavalymen, who tried to stop them, one trooper falling from his horse.**

**Reinforcements appeared instantly, and the demonstration was stopped just beyond the Mission yard. A wall of cavalry formed before it, and from behind that wall there was some cat-calling of quite good quality, but though speeches were made and fists shaken the demonstration presently retired peaceably enough.**

**At the same time at the corner of the street opposite a motor – car stopped with yet another incarnation of Lord Curzon, this time in the top – hat and red and white checked trousers, hanging from a miniature gallows, supported by some cheerful young people who looked towards the Mission almost as if expecting applause. Unfortunately it was just then 1:00 o'clock, and the members of the Mission who had been observing the performance retired to luncheon. The whole thing passed off to the satisfaction of both sides. I've heard some young people say afterwards, "It was as good as May Day, and much better weather."**

**Guards are being maintained in the neighborhood of the Mission lest any evilly disposed person should attempt to demonstrate in earnest by throwing stones or otherwise doing something likely to lessen the hopes of a peaceful solution of the crisis. The characteristic of this, as of all demonstrations during the last few years, was the complete absence of any attempt to stir up national passions. The demonstrations were not against England as in the old days there were demonstrations against Germany, but were exclusively against a particular act of the British Government. Neither the demonstrations nor the defiant language of today's papers mean that the position is yet hopeless. This impression**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**is strongly confirmed by the marked restraint of the speeches in the Moscow Soviet.**

**MG May 14, 1923. #2**

**Pacific Passages In Russia's Note.  
Excited Letters Withdrawn.**

**Moscow, Monday, 12:40 A. M.**

**I have just seen a copy of the text of the Russian Note which was yesterday handed to Mr. Hodgson. The Russian text has been translated in the British mission and the English version checked by a representative of the Russian Foreign Office with a view to avoiding any possible source of misunderstanding.**

**The Note is probably the most sober and moderate in tone ever sent out from the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. It covers 10 pages of Russian typescript. It's concrete proposals do not differ from those suggested in the forecast I telegraphed on Friday. It recognizes the unusual tone of the Weinstein letter, explaining this by the fact that it was written under the influence of excitement and resentment caused by interference in the matter of a neighbor (Poland), and asks that the letter, and the second letter that resulted from it, should both be considered as non-existent.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. May 14, 1923. #3.**

**Power Of The Trade Agreement  
Chicherin On The Outlook.**

**Moscow, Sunday.**

**M. Chicherin, commenting today on the statements in the British press, said that there seemed to be an entirely erroneous impression in England that the volume of trade between the two countries – Russian orders to English manufacturers, etc. – would not be affected by the annulment of the trade agreement. "It is even supposed by some," he said, "that the absence of an agreement and the consequent withdrawal of our delegation, Arco, etc. would enfranchise trade and result in a breach in our front of State or cooperative trading. This is a profound mistake. No such breach will be made. If the British traders are unable to trade through Arcos and Vneshtorg in England, they will not be able to come to Russia and trade otherwise than through Vneshtorg and Arcos simply because the friendly agreement between their country and ours has been torn up.**

**"The annulment of the trade agreement would mean the absence of even that minimum of guarantees, legal and otherwise, necessary for large-scale trade of any kind. If the trade agreement be annulled it will mean the liquidation of business relations between the two countries. I find it hard to believe that businessmen in England are so naïve as to think that Russia would allow them to profit by an act which would only express the definite hostility of their Government to Russia's efforts at economic recovery. But I find it no less hard to believe that in face of the sincere expressed desire of one side to negotiate with the object of removing the causes of existing conflicts and making future conflicts impossible the other side will declare that it prefers rupture of negotiation – to break rather than to mend."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. May 14, 1923-#4.**

**Russia's Answer.**

**Ultimatum Rejected – But Important Concessions Made.**

**Sign Of Wider Diplomatic Anti– Soviet Movement.**

**Italian Agents Telegrams From Moscow.**

**Reckoning On The Fall Of The Bolsheviks.**

**Moscow, Saturday**

**The Russian reply was delivered this morning, and is now on its way to England. The fact that it was not rejected on the spot proves that there is still hope of a peaceful solution. The irrepressible Bucharin said yesterday: "We shall put on top-hats to write it," and responsible officials agreed in saying that no provocative eloquence should be allowed to lessen the hopes of peace. I believe yesterday's forecast of the contents is substantially correct.**

**I am told that the reply constitutes a real effort to make agreement possible, although, as I have already pointed out, it is written by men who believe that a break has already been decided upon and are therefore afraid of weakening the Government position at home by taking too submissive a tone.**

**One of these same pessimists, in momentary hopefulness, said: "Well, if Anglo – Russian relations do survive this crisis they will probably be much better than they have been hitherto."**

**The High Court at Moscow has quashed the sentence on the captain of the trawler James Johnson, and quashed the confiscation of the two trawlers seized [James Johnson and St. Hubert], which are now free. Since the exchange of the Notes another trawler [the Lord Astor] has been seized, working this time about 4 miles from the coast. This action, taken by the local authorities, is still following the old routine orders, the local officials being ignorant of the Government change of policy. It will, of course, be affected by the decision concerning the earlier cases, and the vessel will be released.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**A painful impression has been produced here by the murder of Vorowsky, who was a man absolutely without personal enemies. There is irony in the fact that only yesterday the Russian Government had telegraphed to him to withdraw from Lausanne.**

**MG. May 14, 1923. #5**

**Soviet Leaders Strive For Peace.  
"We Will Not Close Any Avenue."  
Appeal To Dr. Nansen.**

**Moscow, Saturday Night.**

**The great theater was crammed today and a special plenary meeting of the Moscow Soviet, where Chicherin, Trotsky, Bucherin, Kameneff, and others spoke on the subject of the Curzon Note, the Russian reply, and the murder of Vorowsky. Outside the theater there was demonstration after demonstration with flags and banners described "Down with world Fascism." "Russia not a colony."**

**There was great tension in the air within the theater, where more than outside the critical character of the situation was realized. The speeches were studiously moderate in tone, with the possible exception of Bucherin.**

**Trotsky said: "We will not close any avenue to peace, and will do all we can to satisfy the demands – all that is consistent with the dignity of a sovereign State, – but if this is insufficient and the enmity of the Imperialist turns to deeds the Red Army and Red Fleet will fight to the end, though we know that this war will not be one of months but of years."**

**At the end of the meeting Sosnovsky read an appeal to Mr. Ramsey McDonald and the English Labor party begging them to do their utmost to prevent any revocable step, stating that the Russian nation, which was wholly occupied in economic reconstruction, will do all possible for**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**peace, and regards economic relations as the best guarantee. He then read an appeal to Dr. Nansen, whose name was greeted with tremendous cheers, to use his influence against "the incendiaries of a new war."**

**It is impossible not to feel, in listening to the speeches and watching the demonstrations, that the Russians are determined to do nothing to jeopardize the possibility of a peaceful solution.**

**Back to Chaos.**

**A neutral diplomat present at the meeting in the Great Theater said to me: –**

**In my opinion this is the most serious moment in European history since July, 1914. A breakage of Anglo-Russian relations marks the return to force in Eastern Europe just as the Ruhr marks the return to force in the West. It will release the hands of the mischief makers, Red and White, the murder of individuals will develop into a struggle of populations and to actual wars, and the Europe already Balkanized will slide back into chaos.**

**It is childish to talk of the Anglo – Russian Trade Agreement as if it were a mere question of business advantage or the reverse. The existence of that Agreement has acted as a restraint on extremist of all kinds. It represented a policy of constructive vision. It is given breathing space for recovery not only in Russia but in all Eastern Europe. You should be happy that the prestige of your nation has been used for such a purpose.**

**If now that policy is reversed and the Agreement annulled the one great force of moral restraint will be removed. The Baltic States and other national organisms all round Russia, still not strong after centuries of oppression and years of war, will be stripped of the moral protection given them by the fact that the great prestige of England was on the side of peace. Their increased sense of insecurity will itself make more probable every kind of disaster, whether disruption from within or attack from without. The breakage of Anglo – Russian relations will inevitably be the prelude to a second epic of revolutionary wars, which may,**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**indeed, last many years, like the wars of the second epic of the French Revolution.**

**It is a misfortune for humanity that the Western European Governments still believe that war will overthrow the Bolsheviks. The people demonstrating today were good tempered enough because they do not yet realize the real danger of new wars. But if new wars are forced on these same people – and it is pure self-deception to pretend that annulment of the Agreement can have any other effect – you are utterly mistaken if you think that Russia will not fight as a single nation and as a nation bitterly resentful.**

**MG. May 17, 1923.**

**Moscow Apprehensive.**

**Soviet Leaders Fear Lord Curzon Will Force A Rupture.**

**Krassin Awaiting The Summons To The Foreign Office.**

**Full Powers As Plenipotentiary.**

**Moscow, Thursday, 12:30 A. M.**

**Mr. Krassin's report and wireless accounts of the Parliamentary debate on the Russian question have made a gloomy impression here. Those of the Soviet leaders with whom I have talked emphasize that theirs are not official but only personal opinions. They are unanimously pessimistic. They point out that Mr. Krassin went to London under the immediate impression of the ultimatum, prepared to wind up the business, but without instructions of any other kind.**

**They think Lord Curzon intends to face Mr. Krassin with a repetition of the ultimatum, and that he will be able to force a break in the absence of Parliamentary checks. The general feeling is one of disappointment mixed with resentment.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**"No Government in the world could have replied more peaceably than we to such a Note as Lord Curzon's," I was told. "We said we were prepared to discuss even those questions where our answer was considered insufficient, but we cannot be forced like criminals into the dock and compelled with ultimatums to give monosyllabic answers."**

**Until the news came from England the feeling here was very hopeful. The Russian answer was widely approved by the non— Bolshevik Russians, and it was generally felt that after such an answer a break of relations was almost impossible. The news of the rejection of the reply is not yet known in the town, but it is likely to produce a very different temper from that which was shown last Saturday.**

**M. Litvinov in private conversation said: "We have lost the habit of answering as we had to answer at Brest-Litovsk, while it seems that M. Poincare in the Ruhr and Lord Curzon at Lausanne have been taking lessons from General. Hoffmann."**

**MG. May 18, 1923.**

**Firment In Russia  
"Britain On Rupture."  
Reception Of Reply Unexpected.  
Effect Of Secret Telegrams.**

**Moscow, Thursday.**

**"Izvestia" says: – "The English demands are still presented in the form of an ultimatum. The refusal to negotiate with Russia as equal with equal remains. In such circumstances the probability of conflict also remains," and "the Soviet Republic will allow none in whatever circumstances to force an alien will upon her."**

**"Pravda," emphasizing the same points, says: – "Everyone will see who, after all, desires rupture, prepares war, and leads Europe towards new**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**colossal misfortunes – the Soviet Government, which has disarmed, which has made concessions, which offers a peace conference, or Curzon, who arms his army, insists on provocative ultimatums, refuses to come to terms, and unscrupulously dodges his own Parliament.”**

**Mr. McNeill's *speech*, with large excerpts from the debate, is published, and the impression here is that there is a conscious determination to bring about a rupture. I am inclined to believe that Lord Curzon's Note might have had an extremely beneficial effect on Anglo – Russian relations if such had been its intention. I doubt if the Russians have realized how much they had exasperated English feeling. I doubt if they had realized the cumulative effect of many small annoyances. I doubt if they had realized what excellent opportunities they had presented to their enemies. Their misunderstanding of English psychology has always been lamentable.**

**The sudden shock of the Curzon note was salutary enough, and the Russian reply might have been a real turning point in our relations if only the Russians were not being persuaded that Lord Curzon wishes not to improve relations but to sever them. It is probable, I think, that if the ultimatum had been withdrawn on the grounds that the Russian reply had expressed goodwill, the relations between the British Mission here and the Russian Government would have been very much more satisfactory than hitherto. But the reception of their reply is confirming Russian suspicion that rupture is definitely intended.**

### **The Italian Telegrams.**

**There is much comment on the Amadori telegrams published in the "Manchester Guardian." "Izvestia" says: – "Either we have been tricked by counter – revolutionary forgery, or, if the Amadori telegrams are genuine, the Curzon Note is part of a wide, not to say general, plan of new attack on Soviet Russia, perhaps even of a new military attack."**

**As against this it is pointed out that the Italian representatives everywhere expressed condolence over the murder of Vorovsky. . Reference made to the allegation of a split in the Communist Party, which is ridiculed. It is pointed out that that it is precisely because the**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**position is firm that they no longer keep secret ordinary political disputes within the party, which nowadays are quite unlike the really bitter divisions of the early days of the Revolution, which were more or less carefully hidden from the world.**

**Meanwhile resolutions in support of the Government's policy are pouring into Moscow. Naturally many of these are from Communist organizations, but an astonishing number are from ordinarily non-political sources. The Curzon Note, and still more at the reception of the Russian reply, are stimulating patriotic support of the Russian Government. On the other hand, a rupture would produce circumstances in which a return to the revolutionary psychology of four years ago would be inevitable. The hand of the clock will be forced back. The Russian Government would not be allowed to outgrow its revolutionary childhood, and sparks from the Anglo – Russian conflict would be flung into the powder that is scattered all over Eastern Europe just at a time when there was ground for hope that this powder was on the point of losing its inflammable quality.**

**MG. May 21, 1923.**

**British Relations With Russia.**

**Mr. Krassen And Lord Curzon.**

**Danger Of Rupture.**

**Time-Limit Extended Until Wednesday.**

**Moscow, Saturday Night.**

**The Saturday papers print no details of the interview between Lord Curzon and Mr. Krassin, but Mr. Litvinoff says the situation is unchanged by it, though the time limit is extended until Wednesday, and that Lord Curzon recapitulated British demands asking for unconditional Russian compliance. If so, rupture is almost certain. Mr. Chicherin confirms this, saying that the position is exactly what it was before the Parliamentary debate.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**In a private talk he said he was utterly at a loss to understand what Lord Curzon hoped to gain by freeing Russia's hands in the East, and in general why he chose this moment for a clearly deliberate rupture.**

**MG. May 22, 1923.**

**Vorowsky's Burial.**

**Funeral A Russian Demonstration.**

**"The First Victim."**

**Ultimatum And Amadori Read Together.**

**Moscow, Sunday.**

**It is a hot, oppressive day, overshadowed by dark clouds, thunder rumbling now and again like distant gunfire. Every red flag in the town is a broad black border or ribbon. Vorowsky's body arrives at Windau Station at 3 o'clock, and will be carried directly to the Red Square and buried under the Kremlin wall. From three till sundown the flag of the British Mission will be half – masted. Other Missions will probably pay similar respect to the dead.**

**Vorowsky's death, Lord Curzon's ultimatum, and the Amadori telegrams are taken altogether. The Amadori telegrams are supposed to represent erroneous information on which the new attack on Russia is based. Curzon's ultimatum is described as a trumpet call to a new conflict in which the chocolate manufacturer Conradi fired the first shot, and Vorowsky was the first victim. Probably this conception dictated the choice of the Moscow Soviet when it decreed yesterday that Povarakaya Street, where is the house of the British Mission shall henceforth be known as Vorowsky Street.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Later.**

**About 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon the thunderclouds cleared and hot sunshine poured down on the greatest funeral procession that has been seen in Russia since the Revolution. The procession passed through packed streets, a long chain of Communists holding hands separating the actual procession from the crowds overflowing from the pavements. It was just 5 o'clock when the white hearse with black horses and red harness passed the Iberian Chapel into the Red Square. The funeral speeches by Kamenev, Zinoviev, and others were made from a wooden tribune half – way along the Kremlin wall, after which the hearse moved back to the grave, where on a heap of earth newly thrown up a single Red Army soldier was standing guard.**

**The long battlemented Kremlin wall was crowded with spectators, and the square below was to sea of black and red flags. After the coffin had been lowered wreath after wreath was thrown into the grave and hung on the still leafless tree. Then the Revolutionary funeral march was played, and group after group passed by. The processions left the square by other exits, and at 7 o'clock more were still entering past the Iberian Chapel. As the bands left the square they struck up the magnificent old march of the Imperial Guard.**

**The German, Turkish, Afghan, Finn, Czech, Italian, Lithuanian, Swedish, and Polish Missions sent representatives to Windau Station. There were no demonstrations against foreigners, and extreme restraint was also noticeable in today's papers.**

**MG. May 23, 1923.**

**New Russian Reply.**

**Large Concessions For Peace.**

**Conference Urged.**

**Friendly Suggestions For France And Poland.**

**Moscow, Tuesday.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**I learn on good authority that the Russian reply to Lord Curzon will be in written form, which Mr. Krassin will read. I gather that it makes the most substantial concessions on all points, but reiterates the impossibility of settling the question of the distinction between legitimate policy and illegitimate propaganda in the East without preliminary discussions by competent authorities on both sides. Mr. Krassin is not competent for such discussions, and the Russians are prepared to send Mr. Chicherin.**

**They emphasize that if it were merely a question of trade they could not go beyond the terms of the original reply, but peace for Russia is of paramount interest, and they are consequently prepared to submit to demands, even while considering them unfair, rather than bear the obloquy of having done anything to disturb the peace of Europe or to help others to disturb it. At the same time they are not without hope that, even in the event of rupture, war may be avoided.**

**I gather that they intend to work for a Polish – French – Russian rapprochement by way of lessening the likelihood of conflict. A party of French commercial men whose intentions are approved by M. Poincare have arrived here. The Russians attribute some significance to this, and also talk of opening doors to the East for the Polish textile industry by way of making friends out of potential enemies. At the same time there is small doubt that they attribute much greater importance to friendly relations with us than to any political makeshifts, and in case a conference were arranged would go a long way to meet us.**

**I said to one of the Soviet leaders: "You have made us dislike the idea of conference." He replied: "This need not be a grand orchestral conference like Lausanne, Genoa or the Hague, but simply a serious practical discussion between the Foreign Ministers on either side."**

**Plea for Conference.**

**An article by M. Steklov in today's "Izvestia" is symptomatic. He says: –**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**The clearer the firm desire of the Soviet Government to preserve peace, and his readiness to consider any sensible acceptable offer, the stronger will be the position of those classes of the English people, and in particular of the working class, which condemn Lord Curzon's provocative policy and seek agreement with the Soviet Republic. In this connection there can be no doubt that the Soviet Government will do all possible to prevent war or diplomatic rupture in so far as the people shall demand from it nothing that contradicts the vital interests of the working masses of the Soviet Federation or its honor and dignity.**

**The most sensible solution, which we offered at the very beginning and still recommend, consists in calling a conference for consideration of all questions that divide the two Governments and for an amicable agreement between them profitable and acceptable to both parties. Seemingly this point of view is shared by the large working masses of the British Empire. And if they succeed in insisting on that point of view humanity will be saved from the danger of a new conflict the dimensions and consequences of which none can foretell.**

**MG. May 24, 1923.**

**Soviet & Mr. Baldwins Appointment.  
Fresh Hope Of Peaceful Solution**

**Moscow, Wednesday.**

**I saw Mr. Chicherin soon after the telegram arrived with the news that Mr. Stanley Baldwin had been appointed Premier. Mr. Chicherin was greatly pleased.**

**"The Anglo-Russian crisis is exactly where it was," he said, "when we are inclined to hope for a favorable issue from the appointment as Premier of a businessman acquainted with, and unlikely to forget, the real economic interest of England.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**"Further, I find it hard to believe that the new Government will allow its Foreign Minister to take so serious a step as a rupture with Russia before the Government as a whole has been approved by Parliament, and each day's delay must deepen the realization of the possible consequences of such a step."**

**MG. May 25, 1923.**

**Russian Crisis.**

**Lord Curzon Not Satisfied.**

**Further Concessions Desired.**

**Rupture Still Threatened.**

**Moscow, Thursday.**

**Lord Curzon, in receiving from Mr. Krassin last night the Soviet reply to the renewed British ultimatum, expressed dissatisfaction because he is still demanding the dismissal of Russian agents responsible for propaganda, on which point of the Soviet Government feels it cannot yield "without ceasing to be a Sovereign State."**

**The danger of rupture still remains, for I am informed that Lord Curzon, while reserving his reply until he had consulted the Government, said that in his opinion "the Soviet Government is losing its chance of preventing the annulment of the trade agreement."**

**MG. May 29, 1923.**

**The British Agent In Moscow.**

**A "Courteous Fighter."**

**Misleading References In Commons Debate.**

**Moscow, Monday.**

**The Hansard report of the Parliamentary debate on Russia has just arrived. The speeches of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Sir Allen Smith show**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**that both are seriously misinformed on one of the most important factors in the situation here – namely, the personality of the British representative. Mr. Hodgson, so far from being persona non-grata in Moscow, has earned the respect of Russians and the gratitude of all Englishmen who care for the old traditions of our country by his attitude during the whole period of his stay and Moscow.**

**Under great difficulties he has fought, as Froissart said was an English habit, "with courtoisie.," and if the crisis ends satisfactorily (that is, without the proposed public humiliation of Russia or the insistence of such demands as would make rupture inevitable) the personal respect which Mr. Hodgson has earned, alike from political friends and enemies, will be one of the most valuable diplomatic assets we have in a country where the extreme irregularity of our relations naturally places us at a disadvantage. It is this irregularity, not the personality of Mr. Hodgson, which has made Anglo – Russian relations difficult and less fruitful than might have been.**

**The Russians are unwilling to understand that we expect them to treat our representative as the ambassador of a friendly Power while we treat theirs, at best, as a man whom we supposed to be wiser than his own Government, and the worst as a rather disreputable trade delegate. The Russians foolishly but comprehensibly have attempted reciprocity, and have been too often moved by the feeling that if they made things easy for us all the motive for putting things on a normal footing would disappear. The result has been the long series of ineffective bickering's, postponements, and evasions over every sort of detail.**

**This kind of obstructionism, not depended in any way on the personality or the personal standing of our representative but partially on the inefficiency and lack of coordination with which, since the 16th century (compare Hakluyt), we have had to contend in Russian Government offices and very much more on Russian consciousness, that we, while refusing recognition, were expecting from them, and as they rather resentfully realized, were sometimes getting, treatment to which we should be entitled if our relations with them were on a normal diplomatic footing.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**Chicherin did not return from Lausanne with any feeling that he owed us special courtesies, and the Russian delegates in London were continually scolding their home Government for every departure from the principle of reciprocity. In these circumstances Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Sir Allan Smith, Lord Curzon, or Commander Kenworthy (to take examples of widely different characters and methods), as British agents here, would have met with identical difficulties, and would certainly have obtained no better results.**

**MG. May 30, 1923.**

**British Relations With Russia.**

**Serious Position.**

**Lord Curzon Pressing Impossible Demand.**

**Danger Of Rupture.**

**Moscow, Tuesday Night.**

**Mr. Chicherin tells me that the position is extremely serious. Lord Curzon has not yet presented his final demands to Mr. Krassin, but in conversation he has repeated the demand for the recall of Messrs. Shumiatsky and Raskolnikov.**

**Mr. Chicherin says if this demand is insisted on rupture is inevitable, as it is impossible to submit to the recall of ambassadors by of foreign Power, even if this is done in a mitigated form.**

**Lord Curzon also asks that the Russian Government should sign a declaration on the East to be written by himself. On this – since the character of the declaration is still unknown – it is impossible to give an opinion. But insistence on the recall of the ambassadors is sufficient to show that the rupture is still highly probable.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. June 2, 1923.**

**British Demands On Russia Increased.**

**Effect Of The Reply In Moscow.**

**Implied Extension Of Claims For Compensation.**

**Demand For Dismissal Of Envoys Renewed.**

**Concessions Now Regretted.**

**Moscow, Friday.**

**The British reply confirms the pessimism produced by Mr. Krassin's report on his conversation with Lord Curzon. Even those who up to the last minute believed that Lord Curzon was not determined on a rupture now say they were wrong and are openly regretting the yielding character of the Russian replies.**

**I am informed that at the meeting of the Cabinet where the British reply was discussed several voices were raised in favor of the immediate recall of Mr. Krassin, not because of any lack of confidence in him, but on the grounds that his presence in London suggests that negotiations are taking place, when, as a matter of fact, there have been no negotiations, and Lord Curzon, refusing to listen to the Russian arguments or to admit discussion of the Russian counterclaims, merely repeats the original demands.**

**In Government quarters it is considered that the British reply not only repeats the original demands but adds new ones. Thus the Russians agreed to compensate in the cases of Mrs. Stan Harding and Mr. Davison, while protesting against the lack of reciprocity. Paragraph seven of the British reply assumes this precedent to apply to all other cases, and it appears from the letter of the British Committee that there are 2000 other claims. The Russians are to be asked to satisfy all these without any satisfaction for their counter – claims. It is felt here that this principle is capable of indefinitely extension.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**It is also said that the propaganda declaration goes beyond the original declaration in the Trade Agreement. Further, it is pointed out that the apology for and dismissal of the Russian envoys are still demanded, so that actually today the Russians are faced with all the demands of the original ultimatum, and these in some cases have been increased.**

**These feelings in official quarters are reflected in the press, and certainly shared by the rank-and-file of the governing party. When the Russians second reply was sent, it's extremely humble tone roused some opposition, but it was thought that "Lenin had spoken." It is unlikely, however, that the Government can go further. Mr. Steklov's leading article today is headed "Appetite Comes With Eating," and the general feeling is that by yielding the Russians have merely encouraged further demands and gain nothing except perhaps a postponement of the rupture.**

**I have heard it said "The English will presently claim the right not only to dismiss but also to appoint our Ambassadors." Insistence on the actual dismissal of Mr. Shumiatsky and Mr. Raskolnikov puts the Russian Government in the most paradoxical difficulty. Many people knew that Mr. Raskolnikov was to leave his post before the English ultimatum, but now Russian officials are inclined to fear that his leaving will be taken as proof that they have made a secret agreement with the British Government.**

**MG. June 12, 1923.**

**French Inquirers In Moscow.**

**Trade Proposals.**

**Depending On Anglo – Russian Relations.**

**Riga, Monday.**

**The group of Frenchmen who recently arrived at Moscow do not call themselves a mission. They are M M. Duverge, Beretti, Guesde (son of Jules Guesde), together with technical experts. They are independent of the Herriot group of deputies. Their proposals, I am informed on good**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**authority, begin with oil concessions in the Baku district and open perspectives for much other business, including corn export.**

**Their proposals are such that they could not be carried out without the establishment of relations between France and Russia at least to the extent of a trade agreement. I am informed that the preliminary discussions are satisfactory enough, but having regard to Russian unwillingness to part with oil sources I am inclined to think that as oil is a preliminary of the French scheme it is unlikely to go through except in the event of a rupture with England, when the Russians might think it justifiable on grounds of general policy.**

**MG. June 15, 1923.**

**Russian Foreign Relations.**

**New Agreements.**

**French Business Men In Moscow.**

**Mr. Chicherin On The Polish "Barrier."**

**Moscow, Thursday.**

**Reviewing the period following Lord Curzon's ultimatum, Mr. Chicherin, in an interview with me, said: "It has been a period of lively diplomatic activity, and, contrary to the first expectations, the development of good relations between us and other countries is not arrested, but confirmed by the conclusion of new and more extensive agreements.**

**"The day after the receipt of the British ultimatum France telegraphed inviting the Russian Red Cross to go to Marseilles, where a Commission had been waiting six months for permission. Trade representatives with influential relations in financial and commercial quarters and France are now in Moscow, where other French businessmen are also carrying on negotiations.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**"With regard to Italy, the publication of the Amadori telegrams in the 'Manchester Guardian' resulted in the recall of Amadori, who will be replaced by another representative."**

**Asked if it were yet known who would succeed Amadori, Mr. Chicherin said: "Signor Piacentini, now in Riga, is coming as temporary representative. So far from Italian relations with us worsening, there have been renewed expressions of a desire on the part of the Italian Government to conclude a more comprehensive commercial treaty with us."**

**"Denmark has just ratified the trade agreement, and the Court Chamberlain, Klan, has come to Moscow for an exchange of ratifications. We have just nominated a new representative in Sweden, Mr. Osinsky, who goes with the special purpose of putting our relations with Sweden on a more regular footing. The utterances of members of Swedish governing circles lead us to believe he will succeed."**

### **Fishing Agreement with Japan.**

**"One of the greatest Powers in the world, Japan, is now on the eve of formal negotiations with Russia. The question concerning Japanese fishing in Russian waters has been regulated in the most satisfactory manner. The question was one of fishing in closed waters, where in the old days the Japanese always paid for the right to fish. The Japanese agree to resume payment, and, further, to pay for the time when, during the intervention in Siberia, they fished without payment. The informal conversations of Mr. Joffe in Tokyo leads us to believe that negotiations with Japan will not present insurmountable difficulties. A large strata of Japanese society have expressed in an extremely eloquent way their desire for better relations with Russia, and Mr. Joffe has been the constant object of sympathetic demonstrations."**

**"As for America, of course we see no sign of a change of heart in the American Government, but a continually increasing number of senators, Congressmen, prominent industrialist, and financiers are coming to**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Russia, as, for example, the president of the New York Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Irving Bush.**

**"The Rapallo Treaty laid the foundations for intercourse with Germany. Preliminary negotiations are now proceeding for a conference on a commercial treaty, and we have hopes that the conference will open very soon.**

**"With other neighbors whose attitude is especially interesting to us because we have with them direct and daily intercourse of relations during this period have also been completely satisfactory. With Finland we have just concluded an agreement about navigation on the Ladoga Lake and the Neva, besides minor agreements of a commercial character. The repatriations of amnestied Karelians to Karelia is going on, and all other outstanding questions are on the way towards complete settlement. With Estonia we are preparing a railway convention, and preparatory work is being done for trade agreements both with Latvia and Estonia.**

**A Polish "Gallery" Appeal.**

**"Lastly, with regard to Poland, we regard the recent change of Cabinet there as important inasmuch as the new Government seems desirous of repudiating a policy of adventure, and its leaders proclaim their intention of pursuing with regard to Russia a peaceful business policy. Of course the new Cabinet is very conservative and its political and economic ideals are as far removed from ours as heaven from earth, but that is the concern of the Polish people and an internal matter with which we are not called upon to meddle."**

**Mr. Chicherin remarked: "I should have preferred that Mr. Witos had not gone out of his way to attack us as he did and to indulge in the usual bombast about Poland being the barrier to the spread of Bolshevism. This was what you English call playing to the gallery, and was scarcely worthy of a serious statesmen such as we must presume Mr. Witos wishes to be thought. I think Mr. Witos would have made a better contribution to the furtherance of the object which both he and**

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**ourselves are striving to achieve – namely, the establishment of a good neighborly relations between the two countries – if, instead of indulging in cheap diatribes, he had there and then solemnly repudiated the policy of organizing bandit raids against our territory and pledged himself to remove all such obstacles which hitherto have stood in the way of the rapid and faithful application of the Riga Treaty.**

**"We for our part should be only too glad to avoid all pin-pricking and to come down to a sober, businesslike discussion of our mutual needs and the way to satisfy them. We are perfectly convinced that with loyalty and goodwill much can be done for an economic rapprochement between the two countries. On our part, if we are properly approached we are quite prepared to enter into a frank, detailed discussion of all outstanding questions with a view to solving them as rapidly and as satisfactorily as possible."**

**MG. June 16, 1923.**

**Lord Curzon's Note In Moscow.  
Russia To Reply.  
A Misunderstanding.**

**Moscow, Friday.**

**It would be premature to assume the conflict is ended. The opinion in the Government quarters seems to be that the Russian Government, in justice to itself, cannot in silence accept Lord Curzon's summary of the situation as expressed in the last reply received here today.**

**It is pointed out that Russia has never consented to withdraw Raskolnikov in obedience to the wishes of a foreign Government, whereas Lord Curzon's summary suggests that the recall of Raskoluikov which, as previously telegraphed, was decided before the delivery of the first ultimatum, is the result of private agreement with Great Britain. I have also heard it said that there are ambiguities in the English replies, one at least of which is dangerous – namely, that by promising to abstain**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**from supporting anti-Soviet organizations of émigré Russians Lord Curzon leaves himself with free hands for the support, for example, of counter – revolution in Russian Central Asia under the guise of helping the fugitive Emir of Bokhara.**

**These opinions cannot be taken as official, for the English reply has only just been received and is still under consideration, but they sufficiently indicate Russian dissatisfaction with it. I believe the Russians propose to send a reply in a few days' time.**

**[There seems to be some misunderstanding here on the part of the Russian critics. What Lord Curzon assumed was that, all of the grounds of difference having now been removed, the removal of Mr. Raskolnikov to another post, decided upon before the correspondence began, would be carried out. He perhaps had no right to assume it, but he made no demand, and in the case of the Russian representative in Persia he expressly withdrew his previous demand. So again in regard to propaganda. In the formal pledge which Lord Curzon proposed and Mr. Chicherin accepted, with a certain addition, almost the exact words suggested to be added by Mr. Chicherin were accepted by Lord Curzon, and the undertaking has now been fairly reciprocal. If Mr. Chicherin is not perfectly satisfied that this is the case no doubt some further amendment could be made, but probably on examination he will be satisfied. – ED. "Guard."]**

**MG. June 19, 1923.**

**Russians Perplexed.**

**Our They In A Diplomatic Dilemma?**

**Propaganda In Central Asia.**

**Moscow, Monday.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**My personal opinion is the Russian Government itself is undecided how it should take the Curzon Memorandum. The general opinion in Moscow, on the Bourse and everywhere else except among those who have seen Lord Curzon's Memorandum with the amended declaration, is that the trouble is over. But the Memorandum is still not published, so that the general public has hitherto been ignorant of the problem under consideration.**

**That problem has much sharper outlines in Moscow than in England, or it could be made clear only by a map of Central Asia and the Caucasus, which, by showing the contiguity of Russian and Persian Azerbaijan and the way in which Bokhara and Khiva form a wedge deep into Russian Central Asia, would show how very serious to Russia is the threat which the Government reads into Lord Curzon's alteration of the Russian formula with regard to English abstention from supporting anti— Soviet designs.**

**The Russian formula is: "Monarchist White Guard or other hostile designs directed against the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, and its allies." Lord Curzon's vital alteration is not that which substitutes a better phrase for the Russian Republic and its allies, but the addition of the limiting phrase: "By Russians who have emigrated from Russia." The Russians point out that this addition destroys the reciprocity of the agreement because, whereas Russia cannot support third parties against England, England can support third parties against Russia, provided these be not definitely of Russian nationality. They point out that there is nothing to prevent us from supporting the fugitive Emir of Bokhara and thereby prolonging civil war and working towards the extension of English influence into what were Russian protectorates and are now federated autonomous republics. They say: "We cannot support Afghanistan, but the British in Persia can give weapons to a Persian tribe which is attacking Soviet Azerbaijan."**

**Central Asia and Azerbaijan (if only on account of Baku oil) are points on which Russia is particularly sensitive, and it is easy to understand how a form of words which may be accidental contains for them an extremely definite threat in comparison with which the emphasis given in the**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Memorandum to the routine departure of Raskolnikov is a small matter, though still one in which they find hard to pass over in silence.**

**Then comes the disturbing question which is, I fancy, the vital point of discussion. The Memorandum ends with a statement that the correspondence can now be brought to a conclusion. The Russians, with their minds full of the considerations outlined above, are asking: Does that mean that they are forced into a dilemma in which if they do not reply their silence will be taken as acquiescence, and if they do reply Lord Curzon can either regain a position where a rupture is possible, the blame for which will be put on Russian hair-splitting, or ignore their protest altogether, in which case relations will be extremely awkward?**

**MG. June 21, 1923.**

**Russia Accepts.**

**Closing Note From Moscow.**

**A Happy Consummation.**

**Uncalculated Results Of Ultimatum.**

**Moscow, Wednesday.**

**The Russians have looked a long time before leaping, and having leapt and made their protest with regard to the destruction of reciprocity in the propaganda declaration, they are now hastening to proclaim that the incident is closed. This is the burden of leading articles alike in the "Izvestia" and the "Pravda."**

**The "Izvestia" writes: "At the beginning of his henceforth historical diplomatic correspondence Lord Curzon undoubtedly foresaw not those results to which in fact it led." And further: "Now he himself recognizes that after an exchange of opinions the correspondence that he began may be considered closed. We might add that with no less success it might not have been begun, since those points on which agreement has been reached might have been perfectly explained and settled without**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**those threats of diplomatic rupture to which at the beginning Lord Curzon held it necessary to have recourse."**

**Steklov refers in detail to various points, emphasizing that concerning reciprocity, and winds up by saying: –**

**Now, when it is possible quietly to consider the results of the correspondence, we have the right to say that they in a certain sense are exactly opposite to those which perhaps its initiators sought to obtain. They have not succeeded in isolating Soviet Russia. On the contrary, the correspondence has once more allowed the widest masses of all countries, including the British, to demonstrate their sympathy for the peaceful policy of Soviet Russia and their hostility to the stirrers-up of international complications. They have not succeeded in breaking the charm of the Soviet Republic in the eyes of oppressed peoples, and we dare to think that in this connection also the results achieved are exactly opposite to those expected. Finally, considering specifically the question of the mutual relations of England and Russia, paradoxical as it may seem at first glance, the diplomatic correspondence called forth by Lord Curzon, instead of estranging these countries from one another, has rather brought them together. Instead of achieving the tearing up of the Trade Agreement existing between them it has placed on the order of the day the question of widening it and turning it into a general political agreement. On such a result which is to a considerable degree explained by the wise and peaceful tactics of the Soviet Government, we can but congratulate ourselves. And not only ourselves, but all people who ran the risk of being dragged into a new bloodied adventure.**

**Chicherin's Note was telegraphed en clair directly to Lord Curzon, not through Mr. Krassin, emphasizing in this way that the conflict is assumed to be at an end and that relations have left a critical phase and returned to normal methods.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. June 22, 1923.**

**Britain And Russia.**

**Mr. Chicherin On Future Relations.**

**Anti-- Soviet Section Behind Lord Curzon.**

**Moscow, Thursday.**

**In an interview with me today Mr. Chicherin said: "I regret that I cannot share the idea that better relations will result from the recent conflict. Of course, there is a hopeful sign in the fact that a great part of British public opinion has spoken out in favor of better relations. But we have seen only too clearly that another section undoubtedly would prefer that there were no relations at all.**

**"I say with full conviction, and we are all persuaded, that Lord Curzon's first Note was planned to bring about a break. It is not the personality of Lord Curzon but a definite section of the British political world. We have now seen them at work, and it is impossible that hereafter relations should not be colder and more suspicious. We hope, however, that the other and wiser section of opinion would use strong pressure in favor of better relations between our two great countries.**

**"We ourselves desired better relations, and would grasp any opportunity that may be given us for their improvement. But you cannot blame us for the belief that the political group of which Lord Curzon is the spokesman are actually adverse to any rapprochement."**

**I asked Mr. Chicherin: "Is your last Note, printed today, intended to provoke a reply?"**

**A British Misunderstanding.**

**Mr. Chicherin replied: "We hope not. It is merely intended to be a corrective of certain ambiguities in the last British Note, and thus to enable the discussion to be ended. In the British Memorandum of May 29**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**there was a proposal of a definite pledge and the statement that Great Britain on her side would give a similar pledge. In our Memorandum of June 4 we made our suggestions with a view to avoid misunderstanding. In the last British Memorandum Britain takes a pledge only with regard to Russian émigrés in direct contradiction with the actual British proposal of May 29. We are sure this is a mere misunderstanding, but consider it necessary to make a formal correction."**

**Then, referring to Lord Curzon's meeting with Mr. Krassin, I asked whether in future it would be easier for the British representative to have direct dealings with the heads of the Russian Foreign Office.**

**Mr. Chicherin replied: "Our relations with Mr. Hodgson will naturally be those of the Foreign Office in London with our representatives there. Mr. Krassin, as you know, is leaving London, and in the near future we shall be corresponding with the British Government about the personality of our new chief agent."**

**I referred to a suggestion in today's papers to the effect that relations would be better if England had here a representative more pro-- Russian than Mr. Hodgson.**

**Mr. Chicherin said: "We have nothing against Mr. Hodgson, but naturally we have to keep the principle of reciprocity in mind in regulating our relations towards him. For myself, I may say that when I have met Mr. Hodgson at gatherings of other diplomats I have often expressed my pleasure at thus being able to have intercourse with him, normally debarred for me by Lord Curzon's relations with Messrs. Krassin and Berzin."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. June 26, 1923.**

**Rebirth Of Moscow.**

**A City "As Full Of Life As An Ant-Heap."**

**The Revolution Not Dead But Its Worst Period Over.**

**A "New Russia" Rising Under An "Elbowing, Hard – Faced" Generation.**

**Moscow, July.**

**When people abroad ask you for a description of London, they do not usually mean that they want you to give them data on which they can form a judgment as to the present health or decay of an economic system. But that is exactly what is invariably implied by the question, What is Moscow like? It is always a leading question. It always means, What is happening in Moscow with special regard to the struggle between two contradictory economic ideals? And the question is often further complicated by passion, for the inquirers are likely to be themselves partisans of one ideal or of the other, and every word you say in reply will be weighed in uneven scales. During the period of militant Communism it was considered abroad to be Bolshevik propaganda to say that the theaters were open, because such a statement was a suggestion that life ruled by the hostile ideal might yet be tolerable. Similarly during the early days of the famine, Bolsheviks abroad considered it capitalist propaganda to say that people were starving, because the statement was a suggestion of life under their ideal might be impossible.**

**Since the introduction of the New Economic Policy things have changed a little for the better, since anything you may have noticed may be put down by inquirers of either complexion to the partial reintroduction of the old system or to the flexibility of the new. But even so you can never be free from the uncomfortable sense that your evidence is wanted only in so far as it will support the views of those who are examining you, and, and less holy unscrupulous, you cannot, as in writing of cities outside Russia, abandoned yourself to picturesque description.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **The Newcomers Impressions.**

**The foreigner coming to Russia for the first time is free from much of this embarrassment. He finds in Moscow simply a hilly, untidy city, with ancient city walls and battlements, strange old gateways, and a multitude of churches topped with cupolas shaped like tulips in bud, gilt or painted hue or green. He is deafened by the ringing of church bells and the malicious violent use of motor horns, whistles, and hooters. In dilapidated plaster, and here and there in ruined houses and waste spaces, he will find evidence that the city has been through a bad time. If he looks for them he will notice at some street corners that the houses and walls have suffered from a sort of monstrous smallpox and are pitted all over the marks of bullets. But the bullets were fired a long time ago, and the foreigner soon finds that no one but himself observes these ancient scars.**

**He sees a city full of life as an ant – heap, and is struck by the infinite variety of race and costume moving in the streets. All kinds of normalities force themselves upon his notice: the gardener in the Theater Square weighing out bedding plants, pansies, geraniums, and begonias, as, I suppose, he has done for these last 20 years: the young men in shorts rowing racing skiffs on the Moscow River; the fisherman sitting hour after hour in small boats moored broadside on to the stream under the fantastic Kremlin; the crowds of noisy bathers in the shallows above the bridges. He notices the street hawkers who squad in rows with their little trays, selling fine white buns with caraway seeds in the crust, cherries, combs, cigarettes, matches, papers, flowers, toothpicks, and the sunflower seeds that here in Russia replace the chewing gum of America, besides many other things that I do not remember at this moment. In the boulevards under the trees he finds men in linen shirts worn outside their trousers ready to weigh him on scales, and others who will photograph him and give him the result while he waits, as on the sands at seaside towns at home. Only the backgrounds, rudely painted or canvas, are here, perhaps, a little more romantic. Some Muscovites are photographed before painted Kremlin, others affect the background of a lake with swans. Small boys are selling live grass snakes which they have caught in the country. Others offer**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**puppies. And at almost every street corner of our foreigner will notice a vendor of ice cream who slaps in the thick creamy yellow stuff into shallow cups while urchins pay their millions for a lick.**

### **"The Principal Impression."**

**Perhaps, those millions for an ice cream startle him, but he will have had similar surprises in his journey across Europe, and the principal impression he will get from his first few days in Moscow (apart from the fact that he has had appeal to the State to get him a very expensive room in a none too luxurious hotel) will be that, revolution or no revolution, people seem to live in much the same way everywhere. He will begin to look for the revolution and, like some Americans I met in Moscow, will quite openly express his disappointment at being unable to find it, except in a few tattered red flags here and there and in a number of statues and monuments set up to people of whose names he is hardly likely to have heard. Of course, if he is a violent partisan of one color or the other, his impressions will be very different. Some visitors from abroad float around Moscow in an enthusiastic revolutionary dream, while on the other hand a young enthusiast of the other color astonished me no less by telling me that he had the feeling that he was in a prison from the moment that he crossed the borders into Russia.**

**It is only after repeated visits during all the periods of the revolution that one is able to see the Moscow of today against the backgrounds of those other Moscow's, the Moscow's of two or three, of five years ago to recognize which of the seeming normalities are really symptoms of surprising changes, and to realize that the struggle of ideals is still going on, though its tensions and releases are scarcely perceptible in the visible surface of everyday life.**

**It is only when one can look back to the grim, starving, desperate Moscow of the civil war, when one remembers hungry Soviet officials working with frost – bitten fingers, when one remembers the days when all was ready to receive the refugees from Petrograd when all but a few**

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**believed that the city already taken by the Whites, when one remembers the way in which one used to postpone as long as possible the eating of the plate of soup and bit of herring that was ones allowance for the day, that many little ordinary things take on a new meaning, and that one begins to feel that one is watching the rebirth of the city. Only with that comparison continually before one is it possible to realize how much less intolerable life in Moscow has become, and how it is that discontent at this or that (of which the foreigners hear plenty) has not the practical political significance it would have in another place because it is neutralized by the consciousness of almost every Muscovite of how very much better, for him personally, things are than they were a year or two ago.**

### **Garden Suburbs.**

**One of the strongest impressions I got of this renewal of ordinary life was given by a visit to one of the garden suburbs where before the revolution whole families used to live outside the town during the summer, the working members coming into Moscow by train and returning in the evening. This pleasant old life has been largely resumed. There is a good service of suburban trains, and every evening you can see again the spectacle, once dear to Russian comic papers, of the suburban husband going home late and all over (his habit is to hang small packets to his coat) with the parcels ordered by his housekeeping wife. Many of the "datchas" have been destroyed, many have fallen into disrepair. But this year numbers of these summer houses are being brought again into order by people who acquire them on the system of "repairing leases." I visited a family of very hard – up ex=bourgeois at Losiuo Ostrovskaya, about 8 miles out, and found them camped all over the upper floor of one of these "datchas," drinking their tea on the balcony, heating their samovar with pine – cones, having returned, as far as their means permitted, to their ancient habits. The broad grassy alleys of the suburb were loud with accordions and balalaikas, and it was quite impossible not to feel the presence of an exuberant vitality undisturbed by any political preoccupations whatever. I went fishing with a couple of children in a lake nearby, where we were much disturbed by swarms of brown human fish, Boy Scouts and such, who**

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filled the lake with their shouting's and splashings. In 1920 the place would have been deserted, and only an optimist could have prophesied that the one – time gay little summer houses would ever be occupied again.

In Moscow also, since people no longer live rent free, repairs to houses are possible, and builders, who for many years seemed to be an extinct race, are again to be seen about their work. Repairs are sometimes limited to a coat of paint on the metal roofs. I saw this being done to a house opposite the windows of my hotel, in bland disregard of the fact that the cornice under the roof had broken away and was on the point of falling into the street and doing something to lessen the overcrowded population of the town. Still even new paint is something, and many of the streets are certainly looking better than they did a year ago. The population is much greater than it was before the war, and the demand for lodging is accordingly great. As in the suburbs, to repair a ruin is one way of getting a house. A great many of the shop – fronts have been repainted, and even if the painting goes no higher than the ground-floor it has a great effect in the removal of that air of boarded – up desolation that moved Mr. Wells to remark almost tearfully that these shops "would never be open again." They are open again; not only that, there is enough electricity to go round, and, before the nights shortened, while it was still cold, electric fans were keeping a round space clear in the frosted glass, electric lights shown in the shop windows at night, and walking through the main streets one was continually being brought up by the insistent flash of electric advertisements.

### **The Revolution.**

But, in spite of this visible renaissance of ordinary life and ordinary aims, and though there is so much in Moscow that reminds one of non-revolutionary cities, the revolution is not dead. The time has not yet come when it will be possible to echo Hazlitt on revisiting France, when he said, with complaint that nothing was left but a ruling caste and the French people. The revolution is not dead, though many people will tell you it is, and though there are ridiculous young Communist who lament

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**the old and dangerous, hungry days and grumble that life is now so dull as to be hardly worth living. You feel the revolution quickly and unpleasantly enough if you do anything that a highly suspicious Secret Service can imagine is directed against the existing order. And in various ways you are made to feel that this Government serves quite other ideals than those that are served by non-revolutionary Governments, even if it is coming in many respects to behave disconcertingly like a Russian Government, especially at the moment's when it's enemies expect it to behave like a revolutionary one. For one thing, it retains strict control of the newspapers, and every morning, if you read a newspaper at all, whether you like it or not, you are made to see what the world looks like when seen through Marxian spectacles.**

**For another thing, in the law courts the workman has a decided advantage over all others, whatever may be the matter in dispute. But these are small things, insignificant in comparison with the relations between the State and the people, who, taking advantage of the New Economic Policy, have had a great deal to do in bringing about the general improvement in living conditions. In these relations is shown the clash of ideals, the still continuing struggle of the revolution. In spite of the obvious material rewards of the Nepmen, the expensive restaurants, the gambling houses where people can win handfuls of real gold, one is never allowed to forget that the Nepman and their pleasures are not the pride of the State. The popular illustrated papers, so far from showing pictures of Mr. Nepman's new motor – car or Mrs. Nepwoman's latest dresses, as things interesting to and desirably by all, uniformly depict the Nepmen with a sort of humorous disgust, and hold them up not as patterns to be emulated but the reverse. The Nepman is regarded as a loathsome but some necessary beast of burden and as a milk cow, and the State is only gradually learning that you must allow your beasts and cows to eat if you are to get work or milk from them. It is not the revolution that is over, but its desperate period. We are witnessing now the gradual learning by a State with Socialist leanings of how much, for**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**the good of the State as a whole, it must be prepared to sacrifice to keep private initiative active. We are witnessing the first stages of a conscious economic fight between the Nepmen and those forms of trade and industry which the Communist consider as tending towards eventual Socialism, a fight in which the State, being in Communist hands, will throw its whole weight on the side of the trusts, syndicates, and cooperatives, assisting them by all possible privileges in their competition with the private producer and trader.**

### **A Social Change.**

**In the meantime, whichever side may win, and no matter what may be the eventual fate of the revolution, one real and unexpected social change is being brought about under our eyes. The average speed of foot passengers in Moscow has markedly increased. There are still saunterers of course, but it is no longer necessary to walk in the road if you wish to walk at a normal pace. A very considerable number of other people are in a hurry. When I first saw signs of this I put it down to the rapid deterioration of the rouble, which forced people to run and turn their money into goods the moment they received it, since a few hours delay might mean a heavy loss. But there must be many other reasons. In another few years, if the present process continues, Russia will resemble America in other things besides the vastness of her agricultural areas. There is a growing hardness, a growing dehumanization of the methods of commercial intercourse. People are "out for themselves." They have no time to waste on you, and make no pretense of wanting anything from you at your money. In abbreviations of speech, and the passing of the old habit of interminable telephone conversations, this speeding up of the Russians is to be felt. It will have to go much farther before the foreigner coming for the first time will notice it, but to those who remember the old days it is clear already that the New Russia will be run by elbowing, hard – faced folk as different from those who managed the pre– war Russia as were the worthy money – making French bourgeois from the courtiers of the Tuileries.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. June 27, 1923.**

**Patriarch Tikhon Recants.**

**Release Following Confession.**

**Promise To Work For Soviet Russia.**

**Moscow, Sunday (Received Yesterday).**

**I am informed that the Patriarch Tikhon has sent to Krylenko, with a request to transmit it to the Revolutionary Tribunal, a declaration in which he admits the use of the church for the furtherance of counterrevolutionary aims. The Patriarch says he was led into error by not understanding the true nature of events and by his association with Monarchist, and adds that in the future he hopes to work for the good of Soviet Russia.**

**Monday.**

**The Legal College on Criminal Affairs, the supreme court, heard Tikhon's declaration and decided to release him pending trial. The complete text of Tikhon's declaration follows: –**

**In addressing the Supreme Court of the R.S.F.S.R. with the present declaration I hold it due to my conscience as a priest to declare the following:**

**Being educated in Monarchist society and being up to my actual arrests under the influence of anti– Soviet persons, I was in fact inimically disposed towards the Soviet Government and, moreover, my hostility, from a passive state, turned at times to active deeds, as, for example, the address on the subject of the Brest peace in 1918, the anathematization of the Government in the same year, and finally the proclamation against the decree concerning the confiscation of Church valuables in 1922. All my anti–Soviet actions, with a few inaccuracies, are set out in the indictment of the Supreme Court. Recognizing the justice of the decision of the Supreme Court to bring me to account according to the clauses of the criminal code the mentioned in the**

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**indictment for anti— Soviet activity, I repent my offenses against the State order and beg the Supreme Court to seize preventative measures against me – that is, release me from under guard.**

**At the same time I declare to the Supreme Court that I am henceforth not the enemy of the Soviet Government. I finally decisively disassociate myself from the Monarchic White Guard counter-revolution alike abroad and at home. –**

**(Signed) Tikhon, Vasily Bellavin, June 16, 1923**

### **THE RELEASE.**

**Moscow, Tuesday.**

**The Patriarch Tikhon has been released.  
Reuter**

**MG. December 13, 1923.**

**Petrograd In Perspective.**

**Petrograd, December.**

**I have not known Petrograd for very long. Ten years only, but just long enough to have seen it pass with painful fits and spasms through the most dramatic period that is known since the days when Peter the Great lived in his little house there, built his ships along the river, pulled out his courtiers teeth (you can still see there a box of the trophies of his dentistry, each tooth labeled with the name of its one – time owner), and, not knowing the word "impossible," tried with edict, stick, and executioner to make the Russians live and work in the tempo demanded by his own remorseless energy. When I think of Petrograd now I cannot help seeing it as a kind of kinematograph film, a series of flashlights flung on a changing city, without continuity, yet such that the Petrograd**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**of today seems to need for its dramatic valuation a memory of those earlier moments.**

**There is the old Petrograd of the days before the war. I remember an odd jumble of things; and open – air staging of the siege of Azov in one of the parks, a baker's boy flung from a moving train by a conductor, coachmen with brightly – colored puffed silken sleeves, porters asleep at night at the door ways, ships crowding through the bridges in the early morning, nightingales at midnight on the shores of the gulf, the little theater of the Winter Palace where Catherine the Great enjoyed French drama before the French Revolution moved her to throw the bust of Voltaire indignantly into a lumber room, and on the other side of the river the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul with the spire of its church like a gold thorn piercing the mist; perhaps most vividly of all, my first sight of the Troubetskoy statue of Alexander III. By the Nikolai station, a huge man seated like a dead weight on the back of a gigantic draught horse, the statue from which at its unveiling the Czar Nicholas II. is said to have turned his head, so vivid a criticism was that of his father, and, indeed, of the Russian autocracy, seated so heavily, so dully on that powerful beast.**

**Then, in 1914, the days of the Russian mobilization and the beginning of the war; the cavalry horses tied under the trees along the Alexander Garden, the crowds of the recruits with their kettles tied to their little bundles, the weeping women marching beside the them, the tremendous gathering in the Palace Square when Nicholas II. showed himself to his people. A little figure in a white uniform appeared on a balcony of the red – brown palace. Nobody shot at it. Everybody cheered, and a moment later it was replaced by another little figure also in a white uniform, this time indeed the Czar of All the Russias.**

**Just after Christmas in 1916 I came back to it to find it markedly changed. Rasputin had been killed, as his murder was like the first lightning flash of a long-gathered storm. Everyone knew that something was going to happen. The questions on everybody's lips were What? And When? One wild rumor chased another through the winter streets. Then the days of February and March, and Petrograd turned over a life in its**

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history so violently that it broke the back of the book. Cossacks before the Kazan Cathedral, cavalry aimlessly moving on the pavements among the people, shots fired away at the Nikolai station, and the end of the autocracy. I spent four days and nights moving to and fro about the city, saw the taking of the prison in the Ofizerskaya, soldiers "going over to the people" and giving the rifles up to street boys who, regardless of the crowds, use them to fire at pigeons in the street; I saw the Tauris Palace turned into a mixed doss-house, arsenal, and seat of two rival Parliaments, heard Miliukov declare to an amazed revolution that "We have decided to preserve the dynasty," saw returned political convicts dragging their legs still conscious of the chains that have just been struck off, and presently found the whole city of Petrograd become a vast Hyde Park, with more orators than there were street corners.

Then, after the October Revolution, a new Petrograd, grim, hungry, threatened by the hostility of the Germans without and of the Allies within, the whole of the Civil Service on strike, armed patrols by the little watch fires in the streets at night, occasional pitched battles to prevent the looting of wine stores by the soldiery, and almost daily touches of comic opera, inevitable with a Government of enthusiastic amateurs and Ministers staffed for the most part by young people who would never been inside a Government office before. Of that Petrograd I have a still more curious tangle of recollections. In the general excitement of the Revolution it seemed that no one had time to clear the snow from the streets, and sledging was like mountaineering. I remember being overturned, sledge and all, when my driver, greatly daring, tried to cross the valleys and mountain ranges from one side of the road to the other. Odd fragments of memory persist: the frantic bell – ringing of the President of the Constituent Assembly, Lenin sitting smiling in the whole of the Tauris Palace while the meeting within, in spite of itself, digested his uncompromising arguments: the working of Trotsky's shoulders as with Colonel Robins I looked down from the gallery behind him while he was making the finest speech, as oratory, that I heard during the Revolution, on his return from Brest-Litovsk. Then days and nights when it was thought that the Germans might march into the town, the untidy flight of embassies, the quite definitely comic removal of the Government to Moscow, when one of the new Ministers got left behind

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**while filling his pockets with potatoes at a wayside station, but, by hard running, caught the train and continued his journey on one of the buffers of the van. And after that, Petrograd as an increasingly hungry, resentful city that by losing the Government had lost at that time it's only reason for existence and had become no more than a tour de force that had somehow lost its point.**

**It's only hope of recovery was as a port, and for some years the cranes on the quays rusted where they lay. Nothing left Petrograd. Nothing came in. In 1919 a hostile army was within sight of its cathedrals, and there were barricades and trenches in the streets ready for its reception. Petrograd knew the worst rigors and cruelties of civil strife intensified by foreign intervention. In the spring of 1920 it was a city so hard-hit that it scarcely seemed that recovery was possible. The streets at night were like catacombs, and even by daylight one saw little but blind, boarded windows. Things move towards a breaking – point, and in March, 1921, when in Moscow, I got a Reval paper announcing the Kronstadt revolt and reporting that Petrograd was being bombarded, I took the train and went to see what might well be the end of the city. The city was undamaged, the revolt was presently crushed, and from this turning point, with the announcement of the New Economic Policy or the retreat from militant Communism, Petrograd began slowly, inch by inch as it were, to grope its way back to normality.**

**And now? What of the Petrograd that the present-day visitor finds? It looks very much as it did in old days, but for the gaps where wooden houses or scaffolding's have been taken down and burnt. A friend commented on this as we were driving to the station, and the sledge-driver turned angrily round: "Would you have us die of cold, so that the town should look nice for visitors?".... a sharp reminder that the Revolution is still alive.**

**The main landmarks of Petrograd are unchanged, the gold spire of the fortress beyond the river, the blue dome of the Mohammed mosque, the Bourse, still marked by the machine gun bullets of 1917, the half – sunken barges. The red walls of the garden at the end of the Winter Palace are gone, and children play on the space within. The shops are**

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open. I was able, without difficulty and cheaply, to get a motor – car to take me to visit some British ships in the port. The Hotel Europe is better than any hotel in Moscow. The Nevsky Prospect is again a crowded, lively street, and at night the windows blaze and fiery letters invite you to visit cinematograph theaters. But the spirit of the town is different. Petrograd and Moscow have changed functions in the life of Russia. The removal of the capital, the disappearance of the Court, have left this convalescent Petrograd with nothing to hope for but an importance as entirely commercial as was formally that of Moscow. The Winter Palace, Tsarskoe Selo, are relics, no more; interesting solely as historical monuments. Ambitious young people, seeking careers, think not of Petrograd but of Moscow. Petrograd, an outlying city, has no longer any artificial buttress to its importance. It has a chance of being the Russian Liverpool; it has ceased to be the Russian London. It is now a town with struggling industries, a harbor on the Baltic, which, by historical accident, contains one of the finest picture galleries in Europe and some excellent theaters. By the Nikolai station the heavy figure of Alexander III. sits still upon his monstrous horse, a thing immovable, unshakable, not to be disturbed, and seems to have taken a new symbolism upon itself, and to be not only a criticism of the old autocracy, but also an image of the huge vitality of Russia, that even in this tour de force of an artificial city remains, scarcely perturbed by events, cannot be crushed, and will still remain to confute anew all prophets of its collapse.

**MG. December 15, 1923.**

**Trotsky As Critic.**

**Literature And Revolution.**

Trotsky returned to Moscow, after his summer holiday in the south, with a portfolio full of articles on modern Russian literature. A man of his energy of mind could hardly touch such a theme without producing something of interest, and it was not surprising to find in the articles he has been publishing in the Moscow papers ideas which no student of the revolution can afford to neglect, if only for the light they throw on the

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**revolutionary leaders conception of the meaning of the events in which he is playing so conspicuous a part.**

**Far, indeed, from that impatience of art in general which is shown by a few of his comrades, Trotsky regards contemporary art as the final touchstone of social progress in any given epoch. No change, he thinks, has finally justified itself as a part of the main current of history and not merely a little turbulent eddy in the stream until it is accompanied by a corresponding change in art. "The successful solution of the elementary problems of nourishment, clothing, warmth, even of primary education (which would mark a very great social gain), would in no way signify the complete victory of the new historical principle of Socialism. Only a forward move of scientific thought on the part of the whole people and the development of a new art would mean that the historical grain had not only put out a stem but had also given a flower. In this sense the development of art is the highest test of the vitality and significance of each epic."**

**Consequently, he does not look for this new art to appear on the very morrow of the revolution. Culture is not the first stage of well – being but its final result, and the new art is not to be expected until the newly dominant class has proved its ability to bring about material well – being. He points out that the Russian bourgeoisie "added literature to its conquests, and that quickly, in the period when it began confidently and surely to grow rich." "The proletariat cannot prepare the creation of a new, i.e., of a Socialist, culture and literature by a laboratory method on the basis of our present poverty, exiguity, and lack of education, but only by the broad methods of social economy and cultural development. Art needs content, needs a superfluity. It is necessary that the domestic stoves should burn more warmly, the wheels turn more swiftly, the shuttles spin more briskly, and the schools work better."**

### **Literature Freed from Class.**

**He points out that the classes that have dominated in Russia have in turn dominated Russian literature, that there has been a feudal period of literature and a bourgeois period. Now, "The revolution is overthrowing**

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**the bourgeoisie and that decisive fact is forcing its way into literature. The literature that crystallized itself around the axis of the bourgeoisie is dissolving." All that retains any life is seeking a new orientation and its axis is "the people minus the bourgeoisie." This does not mean that there is a new art, but merely that art, like the revolution itself, is in a groping, transitional. period." Our revolution," says Trotsky, "is a peasant who has become a proletarian leaning on a peasant and pointing out the road. Our art is an intellectual wavering between the peasant and the proletarian, organically incapable of identifying himself with either, but in his middle position tending through his association to incline rather towards the peasant. Be a peasant he cannot, but he can peasanties. Whereas without the working-man leader there is no revolution. The poets and writers of these sharply transitional years are distinguished from one another by the way in which they break away from this contradiction, and by the way in which they fill the gulf, one with mysticism, another with romanticism, a third with careful evasiveness, a fourth with an all – deafening yell. With all the variety in the method of getting over it, the essence of the contradiction is the same; the insulation caused by bourgeois society of intellectual labor, including art, from physical labor, whereas the revolution is the work of the people of physical labor. One of the ultimate problems of the revolution is completely to get over the distinction between these two forms of activity." Only if and when that distinction is abolished will the contradiction of which he speaks cease to exist. The result, he thinks, will be an art distinguished from all that has preceded it by being produced in a society which knows no rivalry of classes.**

**With this old revolutionary hope undimmed before him, he makes general havoc of the simpler-minded literary critics of his own party, who, for the last five years, have been going round with lamps looking for "proletarian art," now proclaiming that they have found it, now objecting to whatever art they found on the ground that it was not "proletarian." Trotsky tells them bluntly that they are confounding the means with the end. "The contrasting of bourgeois culture and bourgeois art with proletarian culture and proletarian art is fundamentally erroneous. These latter will never exist at all, since the proletarian regime is temporary and transitional. The historic meaning and moral grandeur of**

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**the proletarian revolution lie in the fact that it is laying the foundations for a non-class, for the first genuinely human culture."**

**"And Not Your Garments."**

**Trotsky, alone, or almost alone, among critics of the new literature now appearing in Russia, insists that the question whether art is revolutionary or not does not depend upon its obvious subject-matter. Book after book comes from the press almost ostentatiously concerned with the life of the revolution. With all this Trotsky is impatient. He is looking forward not to successful pictures of the revolution but to an art which, no matter what its subject, shall be "new" in that it will be produced by men of a new kind who could be what they are only because of the revolution.**

**He looks for the new art not in artists' pictures of the revolution, but in the work of artist whose way of looking at life in general has been dictated by the revolution. "The revolution will find in art its reflection, hitherto to extremely partial, in so far as it ceases to be for the artist an alien catastrophe." "The social whirlpool will not soon be still. Tens of years of struggle are before Europe and America. People not only of our generation but also of the next will be partakers in that struggle, its heroes and victims. The art of this period will be wholly under the sign of revolution. This art will need a new outlook. It will be irreconcilable, first of all, with mysticism, either open or disguised as romanticism, for the revolution starts from the central idea that the sole master should be collective man, and that the limits of his power are to be defined only by knowledge of natural forces and ability to utilize them. It will be irreconcilable with pessimism, skepticism, and with all other forms of spiritual prostration. It will be realistically, actively, filled with working collectivism and limitless creative faith in the future...."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. December 20, 1923.**

**Strange Moscow Report.**

**"Britain Threatening War On Afghanistan."**

**An Official Denial.**

**Moscow, Wednesday.**

**I am informed that the Russian representative at Tashkent [Russia in Asia] reports to Moscow that the British representative, Mr. Humphries, in Kabul had presented an ultimatum to Afghanistan threatening war and airplane bombardment, and demanding inter alia that Afghanistan shall break off relations with Russia.**

**On inquiry in official quarters we are informed that there is no truth in this Russian statement. There has been no question of war on Afghanistan or of airplane bombardment. Nor have we for many months – almost years – taken any interest in the relations between Afghanistan and Russia. All that is true is the four months we have been pressing Kabul to pursue and punish the murderers on the frontier.**

**MG. December 24, 1923.**

**Russia And Great Britain.**

**Chicherin's Idea Of Lord Curzon's Policy.**

**"Trying To Destroy The Barrier Of An Independent Afghanistan."**

**Moscow And Militarism In France And Germany.**

**Moscow, Sunday.**

**In an interview which I had today with Mr. Chicherin, the Soviet Foreign Commissary said:**

**I regret I have confirmatory news concerning the danger of hostilities between England and Afghanistan. The English are already sending out to their ladies. Other diplomats in Kabul, expecting an aerial**

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bombardment, asked Solovieff, our Charge d'Affaires, what he proposed to do in such a case. He replied that he was accredited to the Afghan capital and would remain there. We learn that the suggestion that Afghanistan should break relations with Russia was not included in Mr. Humphries [the British representative at Kabul] ultimatum, but was made simultaneously and verbally in quarters where its significance is unmistakable.

"With regard to the suggestions being made in the Anglo-Indian press that Russia is preparing aggression against Afghanistan, I desire to deny in the most categorical and emphatic way that we have any such designs. You ask why Russia is interested. It is difficult for us not to connect the two ends of Lord Curzon's Eastern policy. The old English policy was to make Russian-English conflict impossible by the interposition of barriers – closed Dardanelles at the one side and an independent Afghanistan at the other. Lord Curzon has destroyed the barrier of the Straits, and seems now to be trying to destroy that of Afghanistan, thereby bringing into definitely nearer perspective a possible struggle which we at least do not desire. It is sad that just when in the West we are finding new friendliness, in the East we should meet Great Britain. I am more than sorry that this new cloud should be rising as if purposely to disturb our relations, which latterly have seemed to promise improvement, as always has been and is our sincere hope."

### **The Desire For Normal Relations.**

Asked how he thought the election results would affect Anglo-Russian relations, Mr. Chicherin said: "Whatever Government may follow it cannot well be more hostile than the present one, which, to say nothing of Lord Curzon's ultimatum in the spring, was willing to allow a newspaper article attributing to Rakovsky speeches he never made to over set its own already expressed agreement at his appointment.

"Then consider Mr. McNeill's suggestion that we are not keeping our promises. It would be most improper if when we are asked to pay very large sums we should do so without examining the accounts. We are

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now in correspondence with the British Government concerning those sums. Under the present English Government no Minister receives Rakovsky, whereas Krassin was received by Mr. Lloyd George. Reciprocity is almost compulsory in diplomatic relations, and of course this reacts on your representative here. Mr. Hodgson and I meet and have opportunities of conversation only in the houses of third parties. I am unfortunately unable to meet him officially.

"However, alike in England and France we note with great satisfaction the rising wave of interest in Russia, and see in public opinion and non-official political quarters an increasing desire for the resumption of normal relations with Russia which should presently bring to an end this anomalous state of affairs."

### **The Border States.**

Ask his views on the Estonian – Latvian Agreement, Mr.Chicherin said: "These attempts to form combinations of borders States will never solve the problem of their healthy development, which can come about only through friendly, economic, and political agreement with Russia, of course with complete preservation of their own independence. It is noticeable that this Estonian – Latvian Agreement was concluded just at the moment when French diplomacy was particularly active in its attempt to thwart the pacific designs of Russian policy. It is unfortunate that certain leading political personages of the Baltic States should, with their eyes on France, try to make a show of hostility towards Russia which is by no means felt by their countries as a whole. They should know that the efforts of French diplomacy are not in the least concerned with the interests of the Baltic States, with the prevention of the formation of settled conditions in Eastern Europe, since the stability in Eastern Europe would hamper France in involving Eastern European States in the precarious combinations towards which the policy is leading.

"Even in smaller matters – for example, that of forest concessions-Baltic interests are suffering because, though we are willing to grant these concessions, they are held up simply because the efforts of French

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**diplomacy thwart every attempt at agreement. The proposals taken by Kopp to Riga, Kovno, and Warsaw were intended to ensure peace at least for Eastern Europe, even in the event of further turmoil in the West. Kopp proposed a mutual agreement of non— intervention in German affairs, and that the transit of goods and food should be independent of any political changes in Germany – that is, he proposed to free economics from politics, to the great advantage of all of the States concern. There could be no better way of ensuring the continuance of peace.**

**"We desire that Poland should be not a barrier but a bridge of economic communication between Eastern and Central Europe. In future our relations with Poland must depend on the Polish realization that Central and Eastern Europe cannot be permanently severed. Catherine the Greats policy of conquest with regard to Poland was dictated by the desire to get too immediate an economic touch with Central Europe. History alone should be enough to show that the necessary condition for a peaceful situation is that Poland should not be an obstruction but a bridge."**

**Watching Germany.**

**Ask what they now felt about the changing situation in Germany, Mr. Chicherin said:**

**"We do not wish to interfere in the internal affairs of Germany, but should view with the utmost concern the formation of a Monarchist, reactionary, or extreme militarist Government. In no case whatever should we intervene, but we cannot but consider the possibility of aggression by such a German Government. In spite of the seeming antagonisms between German militarism and the militarism of M. Poincare, these same German militarist have been able to come to a private understanding with M. Poincare alike in Bavaria and on the Rhine.**

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**"If France were to obtain complete direct or indirect control of Germany the next step might easily be the renewal of the interventionist war with Russia. Lord Curzon's ultimatum in May gave me the impression that such a crusade was already planned and that England was preparing the way for her own participation in it. Now I am happy to say that I believe this last danger no longer exists."**

**Asked how Signor Mussolini's declaration had reacted on Russian – Italian relations, Mr. Chicherin said:**

**"Mr. Jordansky is in Rome negotiating directly with Signor Mussolini. These negotiations are progressing successfully. Meanwhile Italy has a de facto representative in Moscow in the person of the Marquis Paterno. The Rumanians also proposed a conference to settle outstanding questions, and we answered that in principle we are prepared to negotiate."**

**Finally, I asked Mr. Chicherin's views on the discussions in the Communist Party here. He laughed, and said:**

**"It would be giving too much importance to party discussion if I were to say anything about it in an interview on serious matters."**

# **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

## **VOLUME IV.**

### **DISPATCHES FOR 1924.**

**MG. January 4, 1924.**

**World Rivalry For Russian Concessions.  
Negotiations With Big Foreign Firms.  
A £50,000,000 Oil Well Exploitation Company.  
Growing Activity On British Groups.**

**Riga, December 28.**

**M. Litvinov, Assistant Commissar for Foreign Affairs, who has recently been acting head of the Concessions Committee, gave me today the following sketch of the history and present position of the concessions question since the formation of the Central Concessions Committee 18 months ago: -**

**"When the Committee was founded we did not expect much in the way of results in the immediate future, but were content to prepare an apparatus to deal with the state of affairs which we were confident would sooner or later come about. For the moment we knew that we had to reckon with the attitudes of foreign Governments, banks, and big industrial interest who were actually boycotting Russia on behalf of those who had had interest in Russia before the revolution and still hope by means of this general boycott to compel us to accept their point of view. With all this in mind we consider the results rather unexpectedly**

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**satisfactory, not so much on account of the number of concession agreements actually signed but on account of the stream of proposals which from the very beginning have been pouring into the Concessions Committee. Actually the interest in concessions shown by the outside world has been rather greater than our own.**

**"In all 800 proposals have been considered during the last 18 months. If only a few (7%) of these proposals have been accepted, it is because the Union Government, far from being eager to accept any proposal which offers it capital, is for many reasons extremely careful in its choice of suitable concessionaires and objects of concession."**

**M. Litvinov consistently used the expression "the Union Government" instead of "the Russian Government," and explained that the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs and the Concessions Committee are responsible to the Union of Socialist Republics and not to the Russian Republic alone. He continued:**

### **British Proposals Outnumber American.**

**"We have received proposals from nearly every country in Europe, from America, and even from Japan. In number of proposals it is natural that the first place should be occupied by Germany, since the Rapallo Treaty established normal relations between the two countries, and the status of German citizens in Russia and Russian citizens in Germany is properly defined and there is proper protection for goods and funds in both countries. If we divide these 18 months into three periods of six months, it is interesting to notice that whereas in the first six months the second place was taken by America, in the succeeding periods the numbers of British proposals exceeded the American. This shows that the existence of the Trade Agreement, incomplete though it may be, was enough to ensure that the ground was better prepared for Russian dealings with British than with American concessionaires, in spite of the greater financial backing of the latter. The fourth place in the list is that of France, followed by Italy and others.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**"With would-be concessionaires from countries that are without agreements with the Union Government obstacles crop up at once, even in the first stage of negotiations, even in the stage of inquiries. This is practically illustrated by France. There have been about 80 French proposals, of which not one has resulted in the signing of the final agreement. Both parties have tried to do business together in spite of the political hostility, but have found themselves unable to overcome objective difficulties lying outside their control. For example, when the question arose of the place of session for the board of directors of a proposed mixed company we could not persuade the Frenchmen to have it in Moscow, where they are naturally on a different footing from that of foreigners whose Government is in relation with our own, nor could they guarantee to us that our directors would have legal status in France or would even be admitted to that country. It is impossible to do business with a country the Government of which declares that it does not guarantee our funds or goods against the arrest by the courts. This has recently been emphasized by M. Poincare's answer to French banks who had raised the question, as well as by certain decisions of French courts. Naturally when proposals from persons of various nationalities concern the same object the Concessions Committee has to take into consideration the political relations between ourselves and the various countries and to give the preference to Germans or Englishmen over Frenchmen.**

**"Technically, too, negotiations with Frenchmen have been more difficult. Or as in London and Berlin we have special concessions committees, subordinated to the Central Committee, empowered to carry on preliminary negotiations, to give information, and to sign preliminary agreements, we have nothing of the kind in France, where there is no representative of the Union Government empowered to negotiate or even to sign letters on subjects connected with concessions. Frenchmen have had to go to London and in most cases to Moscow before getting beyond the first stage of inquiries. And of course there are particular difficulties in the matter of visas.**

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### **British Groups'Efforts.**

**"As far as regards Great Britain one can state that, after a short period that followed Lord Curzon's ultimatum in the spring, during which a certain reticence was observable on both sides, there has been a marked revival of relations between British groups and the Concessions Committee. During the last few months the Concessions Committee has been approached by the most important British industrial and financial groups which, up to that time, have been among the adversaries of business with Russia. More, among these groups are a good many previous owners of property that was nationalized in Russia. We regard it as most significant that these adversaries, after unsuccessful attempts to turn their Government upon us, are now themselves trying to come to terms directly with the Government of the Union.**

**"Our position in the questions left open by the Conferences of The Hague and Genoa has not changed. But, as we have on several occasions declared, there are a considerable number of industrial and mining undertakings which we are prepared to give as concessions on reasonable terms, and among them some of the nationalized property. Not only do we not exclude this concessionaires previous foreign orders, but we should in many cases prefer them to new – commerce on account of their experience, their knowledge of the particular business, of Russia, and of the Russian people.**

**"The objects of the proposed concessions are of the most various kinds, agricultural, mining, timber, railway, and trading concessions. The concessions are of two forms; 'pure' concessions, where foreign companies have complete control and administration of undertakings on which they merely pay a royalty to the Union Government, and 'mixed companies,' in which the Union Government or its organs are partners in the business, contributing to the capital either in kind or in money, sharing loss and profit and participating in the administration.**

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### **Concessions Now Being Worked.**

**"As examples of the more important concessions that have been actually granted and are now working, I may mention the following [a desyatin is 2.7 acres; a verst is nearly two-thirds of a mile]; –**

**"The combined railway and timber concession of Magarybinsk. This concession comprises twenty-one forest districts, of a total area of over a million desyatins, the concessionaires for their part undertakes to complete the construction of the Magarybinsk railway, 250 versts in length. The concessionaires are German.**

**"The Russian Norwegian Timber Company. This company is exploiting forest in the Onega district over the area of 2,900,000 desyatins.**

**The Russian English Timber Company exploiting an area of 1, 267, 000 desyatins**

**"The Russian Dutch Timber Company exploiting an area of one – and – a – half million desyatins.**

**"Then there is the Krupp Agricultural Concession, with an area of 25,000 desyatins and an initial capital of £40,000, the major part of which comes from England through the Russian Land Concession Manytsh, Limited.**

**"Among trading concessions I would mention the Russo-German Otto Wolff agreement, whereby, in addition to the share capital, Wolff has given to the mixed company a credit of £750,000 and to the Union Government a credit of half a million. Several of the trading companies who had agreements for a single year have already renewed them, a proof that they are making profits. The most important of the proposed concessions have, however, not reached the final stage of agreement. In some preliminary agreements have not been signed, in others that they have not been completed.**

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**"A preliminary agreement has been signed concerning what is known as the Krivoi Rog Concession, for the exploitation of iron and coal mines, and engineering and smelting works. A preliminary agreement has also been signed concerning sugar factories in the Ukraine.**

### **Oil Wells.**

**"Perhaps the greatest interest abroad has been shown in connection with naphtha. We have hitherto only given concessions for oil prospecting, as, for example, to the Barnsdale Corporation in the Baku district and to an Italian company in Georgia. But quite recently a preliminary agreement has been signed for the formation of a mixed company for the exploitation of existing oil wells on a scale that will require a capital of £50 million. The concessionaires in consultation with their bankers have agreed to float a loan for the Union Government of over £40 million. Needless to say, we should not have entered on an agreement of such magnitude with any but firms of the very highest standing, although at the moment I cannot, without their consent, give you the name of the group involved.**

**"Negotiations are also in progress with important Anglo-American groups concerning concessions for gold and other precious metal mining. Agreements concerning silk manufacturer, cotton growing, the construction of elevators, fishing, metallurgical works, and railway construction in Central Asia or on the point of being concluded.**

**"It is impossible to deny the fact that confidence in the reconstructed republics of the Union is growing from day to day, and with this growing confidence proposals from abroad are increasing in number and improving in quality. If the number of agreements signed is inconsiderable in proportion to the number of proposals received it is due to the fact that the Union Government is by no means in a hurry. It prefers to proceed slowly with its concessions policy, carefully considering each proposal from the point of view of the ultimate economic interest of the country and retaining in the hands of the State control of the most important branches of industry. In this, as in other respects, we are guided by the precept of Lenin,' Less but better.' We**

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**have a great choice of proposals before us, and shall certainly turn that choice to the profit of the State."**

**MG. January 9, 1924.**

### **Tsar's Letters To The Tsaritsa. The Superstitions of An Autocrat.**

**The Russian Central Archives have just published the third volume of the letters and telegrams exchanged by the late Tsar and the Tsaritsa. The first, second, and fourth volumes are as yet unpublished, though the fourth is announced is nearly ready. This third volume includes the correspondence preserved in the Archives between the dates of April 28, 1914 and December 31, 1915. A Berlin edition of some of the Tsaritsa's letters has already been noticed in these columns. This official Russian edition prints both the Tsaritsa's letters and those of the Tsar, of the existence of which the Berlin editors seem to have been unaware, together with the telegrams which passed continually during even the shortest separations. Of the Berlin edition the editors of this say roundly that it was stolen from the Archives. It was very badly edited. This officially prepared edition is much more satisfactorily annotated though for English readers it is regrettable that the letters are published in a Russian translation and not in English, the language in which they were written, and for Russian readers it is regrettable that the translation is extremely careless. I have compared the Russian and English text of a number of the letters, and have yet to find a letter wholly free from inaccuracy. For this reason the quotations in this article, being retranslations from the Russian, can only approximately represent the original.**

### **Rasputin.**

**The Berlin edition of the Tsaritsa's letters naturally left people wondering as to the part taken by the Tsar in the correspondence, and it was easy to believe that he willingly found refuge at Headquarters**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

from the hysteria at home so clearly revealed in his wife's letters. That estimate must now be revised, unless we are to credit the Tsar with almost inhuman literary skill in matching his replies to the letters he received. A smaller, gentler, much weaker character, he shared much of his wife's abnormality, even if he did not pray for "strong railway accidents" to finish off people whose politics he disliked, even if he was unable "to bang on the table" in the manner that she so urgently demanded. He seems to have taken Rasputin as seriously as she. For him, too, he was a Prophet and a Man of God. "Strange," he writes, "how accurately our Friend foresaw the length of time I should be absent: 'A month shalt thou be there and then thou shalt return.' " The use of the capital letter for Friend and of the second person singular in Rasputin's words shows on what extraordinary terms the Tsar of All the Russians was with this cunning, unscrupulous, dissolute Siberian peasant. And that quotation is in exactly the same tone as the following from the Tsaritsa: "Our Friend is always praying and thinking of the war.... He says we are to tell him at once if there is anything particular.... so she did about the foggs and He scolded for not having said it at once.... says no more foggs will disturb." It is strange to think that anywhere in Europe people were writing such things in 1915.

The Tsar's letters have not the pungent quality of the Tsaritsa's. They have none of that almost terrifying inconsistency, that remorseless tapping on a high note, like piano – toning. They are simpler. When the Tsaritsa mentions a mosquito buzzing around her head as she writes the mosquito serves a literary purpose and helps her to take hold of her correspondent by projecting an image of herself into his mind. When he writes of a herd of buffaloes he has seen, or of a regiment, he is merely talking and telling his wife what he has been enjoying and you know that he was really very pleased to see the buffaloes or the soldiers, and that as he writes their images in his mind and he is thinking about them and not about his wife's mind when she will be reading his letter. He never tries to dictate her attitude towards anything, whereas in all her letters you cannot but feel that she had so vivid an idea of the precise attitude of mind that a Tsar ought to have that she could never rest from a ceaseless, almost desperate, effort to make this rather shrinking little man the sort of Tsar she thought he ought to be.

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### **The Dismissal of the Grand Duke.**

**Now and again he almost lived up to her. Just as a French general recently in Poland looked with satisfaction on the multitudes of children as "future soldiers and allies of France," so the Tsar in the Cossack country was pleased "most of all" with the "incredible marvelous number of tiny children... All future subjects!" But for the most part he only tried to live up to her. He showed weakness rather than strength of character in his expressed delight at the feeling of strength that he got from doing anything against the advice of his Ministers. He dismissed the Grand Duke Nicholas from the post of Commander-in-Chief because of Rasputin (who was waging a feud with the Grand Duke) had persuaded the Tsaritsa that he was trying for the throne. Yet his letters show how frightened he had been of his own act and how thankful that it was over. "All the morning on that memorable day, 23 August, on coming here I prayed a lot and ceaselessly read over and over again your first letter (in which she told him that he was showing himself 'an Emperor, a real autocrat,' and that everything would be all right, as God and Rasputin were on his side). The nearer came the moment of our meeting the more peace ruled in my soul. N. (the Grand Duke) came in with a kind, cheerful smile, and simply ask when I should order him to leave. I answered in the same tone that he might stay for two days; then we talked of questions concerning military operations question about certain generals, etc., and that was all."**

**On February 28, 1915, when he had gone to Headquarters, he wrote: "although, of course, I am very sad to be leaving you and the dear children, this time I am going with such peace in my soul that I am myself surprised. Whether this comes from the fact that yesterday evening I had a talk with our Friend, or from the newspapers which Buchanan gave me, from the death of Witte, or perhaps from the feeling that something good is happening after the war I cannot say, but in my heart reigns a truly Easter peace." Witte had that day died. A "truly Easter peace" on account of the death of one of the greatest of Russian statesmen! Certainly there is something here to make one agree with the remark of a lady of the Court, quoted by Professor Pokrovsky from Kuropatkin's**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

diary, that the Romanoff's were "a changeling race." This was not an isolated instance. In 1911, when Stolypin (who had possibly save the dynasty) was murdered, the Tsaritsa said that she would not pray for his soul, and the Tsar refused to go to the funeral service. Here was the hatred of the weak autocrat for instrument stronger than himself.

### **The Sentimental Husband.**

Naturally not a big man, blown this way and that by the superstitions of himself and his wife, clinging to fetishes of a kind that most savages have rejected – miracle-working pictures, combs that imparted wisdom when he brushed his hair, and walking – sticks that had acquired sanctity by being handled by a Rasputin, – further distorted by the very fact of his exalted position, he kept still in touch with ordinary humanity through his feelings as a husband and a father. The dancer in the palace over the bridge – the lady whose affection for him his wife seems to have tolerated, soothing any pain she may have felt on the subject by a running criticism of the lady's deteriorating looks, manners, and temper. These things apart, he was a model even a romantic husband, reminded by the weather of "that day in Coburg," weeping on hearing at the front a tune that he had heard with his wife at Livadia, and writing on the anniversary of their betrothal: "I wish you health and all that a deeply loving heart can wish, and thank you on my knees for all your love, devotion, friendship, and patience which you have shown in these long years of our married life." They would have been innocuous and perfectly happy in a small house in the country, with a planchette, a moderate income, a little church to patronize, and rather better health. As it was their actions, their obstinacies, narrowness, hallucinations, and other eccentricities was seen in history to have played a bigger part than perhaps they did in bringing about the collapse of the greatest of European empires, in making its fall so precipitous when it came, and so in preparing the way for the hideous tragedy that overtook themselves.

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. January 21, 1924.**

**Party Discipline In Russia.**

**The "Big Stick."**

**Critics Of Leaders Silenced.**

**Three Chiefs Absent Through Illness.**

**Moscow, Sunday.**

**The Communist Party Conference wound up discussion with a series of unanimous resolutions and the general rout and public discomfiture of the Opposition. This, however, unfairly represents what has actually happened. The story of the discussion is as follows.**

**On October 15 a document signed by 46, including Osinsky, Pyatakov, and other well-known Communists, strongly criticizing the party leadership was handed to the Central Committee. The Committee were erroneously expecting a German Communist revolution to break out on November 9, and was therefore very unwilling at that moment to make a public exhibition of disagreements in the Russian party. Therefore, instead of calling a full party conference at once, they made a smaller conference as authoritative as possible, consisting of united plenums the Central Committee, and the Central Control Commission, or 110 persons in all.**

**Trotsky Changes the Issue.**

**At this Conference Trotsky, who had not signed the document, expressed his solidarity with the 46. The Conference worked out resolutions which went a long way to meet the demands of the 46, and these resolutions were passed unanimously. That is to say, actually to a very large extent the 46 gained their point. But on the next day Trotsky published a commentary in terms which destroyed the unanimity just attained, and thereby what may be considered the second period of the dispute, which since the Oppositions demands have been already largely met by unanimous resolutions, found them with a much weakened**

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**platform for further argument and ended in the public humiliation. Towards the end of their discussion they began to talk of matters outside actual party affairs, with the result that they unloosed against themselves all the thunders of the orthodox.**

**It was even felt necessary to bring out the big stick with which Lenin kept the party together during the crisis of 1921, at the moment when he was forcing through his new economic policy. This is a hitherto unpublished clause of a resolution on party unity and empowering the plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission by two-thirds vote to exclude from the party or reduce from the status of member to that of candidate even a member of the Central Committee if he should break party discipline by forming an oppositional faction. This big stick was brought out and flourished and the Opposition leaders given a most severe talking to and brought to heel.**

**Hard Hitting.**

**The orthodox have been particularly hard on Trotsky, whose "six mistakes" were solemnly enumerated by Stalin; on Radek, who, besides being criticized for mistaken policy with regards to German Communist, was warned not to carry the party discussion into the Communist International; on Pyatakov, and also on Krassin, who at the last moment, when the discussion turned on economic questions, took the side of the Opposition.**

**I suppose no party in the world has ever been able to indulge in such an amount of public hard-hitting without serious risk of division. The whole discussion is now tidily swept up for a moment with brooms of resolutions in which both sides agree, and the party is quite ready for the All Russian Congress which began last night and for the Union Congress which opens in a few days.**

**This is the least important of the All Russian Congresses, because it is now a parallel to the All Ukrainian and other Congresses of States within the Union, and so preparatory for the All Union Congress which will be the first since the formation of the Union.**

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### **Speakers Heard in the Snow.**

**I was present last night at the opening of the Congress in the great theater. A powerful electric lamp threw a crimson light over the wide stretch of snow between the theater and the garden. The "Eleventh All – Russian Congress" was spelled out in electric lamps across the building, and high above it, for once the Imperial Eagles were brilliantly illuminated, was the hammer and sickle of the Republic. Loudspeakers connected to microphones in the theater were placed above the square, and the voices of the orators, the coughings and the applause, were heard by the crowd outside in the snow. Inside the theater was packed from floor to ceiling with delegates, noticeably better dressed than in the old days. The diplomatic box was full.**

**The presidium was much the same as usual, though Lenin, Trotsky, and Bucharin were all absent through illness. Greetings and good wishes for recovery were sent to them, and Trotsky's name was loudly cheered in spite of the castigation he had so recently received. Kalinin was the president. General Budenny, the Cossack cavalry leader, came in in a neat uniform with three flaming decorations on his chest, and took his seat in the presidium getting a considerable ovation, though nothing like that given to Mrs. Lenin when her election was announced. The most interesting item of the program, the reports of the Executive Committee and of the Council of Peoples Commissars, was held over until the Union Congress, and the proceedings began with a series of greetings.**

**A young German Communist made an extremely long and violent speech, which seemed altogether out of place. He was followed by an old peasant woman and workers from Siberia, the Urals, and elsewhere, bringing greetings and in some cases symbolic gifts, such as an embroidered flag and a big shell "for the enemies of the State." In general the proceedings were decorative, but it would be foolish to expect in the present circumstances of peace and unthreatened stability the fire and excitement of the congresses of the past, when the Soviets were consciously fighting for their lives and when each Congress was**

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**felt by its participants to be the staking out of a claim in revolutionary history.**

**MG. January 23, 1924. #1**

**Death Of Lenin.**

**Sudden Relapse.**

**Hysterical Wailing In Congress.**

**British Mission Flag At Half – Mast.**

**Moscow, Tuesday.**

**Lenin, who was at Gorki, a village 20 miles from Moscow, had a sudden relapse yesterday, became unconscious, and died an hour later, just before seven in the evening.**

**When Congress met at 11 this morning Kalinin, who was hardly able to speak, announced Lenin's death in a few broken sentences. Almost everybody in the great theater burst into tears, and from all parts came the hysterical wailing of women. Tears were running down the faces of the members of the Presidium. The funeral march of the Revolutionaries was played by a weeping orchestra. Lashevitch announced that January 21 will be a day of mourning in the Russian calendar.**

**The elders of Congress will go to Gorki tonight and bring the body to Moscow tomorrow, where it will lie in state in the hall of the trade unions, which from six tomorrow will be open to the public. The funeral will probably be on Saturday. Congress, of course, adjourned.**

**Lenin's death was entirely unexpected, as he had made steady progress for some time. At first he had only been allowed to hear the headings of the newspapers, but latterly he has taken an almost autocratic part in directing his own convalescence, and himself chose what portions were to be read to him. His paralyzed right arm made writing impossible, but his attendants learnt from scraps of paper in his room that he was**

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**secretly teaching himself to write with his left hand. Since then improvement had been rapid, and before Christmas he was even able to go out shooting in the forest. Only the other day Kamenev announced to a meeting that Lenin was actually recovering and would return to his post.**

**His long drawn – out fight against his illness has saved the country from the shock that would have been dealt by his death had that occurred with his first stroke, but even so his death has come as a moment when, during the recent party discussion, his absence has been particularly felt, and at the moment when the party dispute is scarcely ended, and on the eve of the first Union Congress. His death is a blow not only to the Communist Party, but to all Russia. Even the irreconcilable enemies of the Revolution are unable to disguise their respect for one of the greatest figures in Russian history.**

**It so happens that today is a holiday in memory of those who fell on Bloody Sunday in 1905, so that the town was hung with red flags with black streamers long before it knew it had to mourn a death more intimately felt by all. The flag on the British Mission is at half – mast.**

**MG. January 23, 1924. #2**

### **The Career Of A Great Revolutionary.**

**There is no adequate biographical account of Lenin. His devoted disciple Zinoviev once made a speech about him which was afterwards issued as a sort of biographical pamphlet, but there is nothing in it – nothing at least, of the things one would like to know. I read it two or three years ago. I felt I was looking at a mist which, I happen to know, concealed a lighthouse. I could hear a foghorn sounding vaguely where the lighthouse must be, but I could not even make a guess as to what the lighthouse was like. I daresay it was just as difficult for the men who knew Napoleon as Zinoviev knew Lenin to write about their hero. They too, perhaps, were over – conscious of the caricatures being made of**

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him by his enemies, and, resenting them, were unable themselves to do more than produce a conventional, rhetorical picture, a picture to a formula, which might have been produced without ever knowing the man at all.

Lenin's origin is a little masked by the writers of the official Communist biographies issued in Russia, who are naturally anxious to pretend that he was a simple "peasant and workman," "son of the people," like, for example, Rykov or Kalinin. His father was a civil servant of sufficiently high rank to obtain "hereditary nobility." He was a Government inspector of schools in the Volga district and lived at Simbirsk, where Lenin (Vladimir Ilyitch Ulianov) was born on April 10, 1870. The older Ulianov must have been a remarkable man, for he, I believe, was indeed of peasant origin, and it was not easy in the old Russia for such a man to attain such a position. It is even more remarkable for that family of the school inspector should have been revolutionaries, for, as a rule were more devoted adherents of the old regime than those who had but recently found their way into the superior caste, Lenin was 17 when his elder brother, Alexandra, was hanged by the Tsar's Government as a terrorist, a narodnik, one of the social revolutionaries with whom throughout his whole political life Lenin himself was to carry on a determined struggle. In that year Lenin left school, and began law studies at the Kazan University. But, perhaps on his brother's account, he was already a marked man, and was almost immediately expelled "for taking part in the student's revolutionary movement."

### **A Marxian Revolutionary.**

Four years later, however, he was able, as an external student, to pass his examinations at St. Petersburg University. He was already entirely absorbed by political and economic theory, and, while taking practical part in the preparation of revolution by forming reading circles and clubs among the workmen, was beginning his long career of polemic against those who had other views than his own on the interpretation of Karl Marx. While he was still in the early 20s he had made himself a reputation, pertinacious enemies and devoted disciples in the little underworld of revolutionary theorist. He was easily exposing the

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**uselessness of assassination as a means of revolutionary struggle, and with more difficulty and much greater interest showing that the Russian Revolution, when it should come, would not be directed merely against the autocracy but would bring with it a far more significant struggle between the investing and the wage earning classes.**

**Long before the 1905 revolution Lenin founded in St. Petersburg "The Alliance of Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class" which by its very title, was a challenge to other revolutionaries as well as to the autocracy. Other revolutionaries attacked him with words. The autocracy put him in prison and presently sent him to Siberia. Here he acquired a love of sport that lasted until his death. Even during the most difficult times of the Revolution Lenin used at week-end's to escape from the Kremlin and go off to the country round Moscow with his gun after capercailzie, hares, and partridges, sometimes successfully, sometimes not, but always with boyish enjoyment, throwing off completely the cares of his position. Rykov often accompanied him, and on returning from one of these expeditions told me, who asked him if they had had much sport, that they had seen nothing, not even a hare, but Lenin had finally, in despair, pulled a copy of "Izvestia" from his pocket and fixed it up on a tree, and that he and Rykov had then worked off a good deal of suppressed feelings by putting shot into Steklov's leading article. Steklov's leading articles were, for their dullness, a standing joke at the time.**

**But in Siberia Lenin of course used his banishment for other ends than sport alone. He did an enormous amount of reading and acquired some of that astonishing knowledge of foreign languages which enabled him later at internationalist meetings to talk with one delegate after another and with each in his own tongue. In Siberia he wrote his first pamphlet, "The Task of Russian Social Democrats," and his first book, a scientific study of "The Development of Capitalism in Russia." In this book he was seeking to prove that Russia was from the Marxian point of view, already a capitalist country, so that the theories of Marx as to the inevitable revolutionary process would hold good. This was, of course, polemic against those who said that to Russia at least the diagnosis and reasoning's of Marx could not be applied. He was also engaged on the**

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**philosophic studies, the results of which are probably better known in Masaryk's criticism of them than in Lenin's book.**

### **Beginnings of the Bolshevik Program.**

**The next stage of Lenin's active political life was marked by the publication of the revolutionary newspaper "Iskara" ("The Spark"), where he wrote an article that afterwards became a book under the title of "What to Begin With." In this he set out something very like the eventual Bolshevik program, and opened the split that afterwards widened to a gulf in the body of the Russian Social Democratic Party. To get anything like a picture of his life at that time one must imagine the setting of it – a group of friends exclusively revolutionary, talking ceaselessly, arguing over a revolution that had not yet begun and passionate in their, so-far, purely theoretical argument to a degree almost incredible in our milder political climate. We must imagine that group of passionately critical readers of newspapers, seeking everywhere for facts, for signs that would buttress their theories, satisfy their craving for action by smuggling revolvers, dodging the police, by illicit printing of inflammatory pamphlets, watching the course of events, political and economic, with the closeness at least as great as that with which events are followed by a Government in power. They were in a sense a Government, the Government of an embryonic revolution and during those years they got all the practice they needed in Cabinet crises, reconciliations, compromises, flights into the wilderness, and so on, a fact which goes far to explain the absence of such things when, from being captains of castles in Spain, they obtained control of an actual country. During all this time Lenin's personality and intellect were enforcing the respect of the larger-minded even of his most decided opponents. Plekhanov, for example, at a meeting where his own supporters were doing their best to bring about a personal quarrel between him and Lenin, who was attacking his theories, put his hand on Lenin's shoulder, who was standing beside him, and angrily rebuked his disciples. "You will never make me quarrel with him, for he is a man, and you are a lot of old women."**

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### **The 1905 Revolution.**

**The revolution of 1905 consolidated Lenin's position and confirmed him in his beliefs. He saw in the strikes of those days, and still more in the activities of the then first created Soviet of Workmen's Delegates, absolute proof that Russia was, as he had predicted, moving towards a struggle of classes of greater significance from a Marxian point of view, than the mere struggle between Parliamentarianism and Autocracy. In the armed revolt of the Moscow workmen he saw more promise than in the swiftly waning triumph of the establishment of the first Duma. Later, when the Autocracy regained confidence and proceeded systematically to withdraw the concessions it had made and to suppress the Labour movement (from February, 1906, until the revolution of 1917, no Trade Unions Congress was able to meet in Russia), Lenin remained for as long as he could in St. Petersburg, insisting in one pamphlet after another that the Moscow revolt and the brief existence of the St. Petersburg Soviet were definite signs that sooner or later the revolution would recover strength. In 1907 he emigrated to Geneva, and afterwards to Paris, where, in great poverty and surrounded by people who insisted that the Russian Labour movement was dead, he in illegal papers, "The Proletarian" and "The Social Democrats," proclaimed its inevitable resurrection.**

**Five years later, in 1912, strikes and the conflict with the military at Lensk, when a number of workers were shot, seemed to him to show that a new revolutionary wave was close at hand. He moved from Paris to Galicia, to be nearer the Russian frontier and in closer touch with Petrograd and Moscow, where he was writing for papers of the Extreme Left and corresponding with some of the Labour members in the Dumas.**

**Two years later came the European war. Lenin had long been expecting it. Persuaded as he was that the present economic system of Europe was nearing its end, he had declared that the contradiction of interests within that system would lead to a war which should still further weaken it and prepare its final collapse. His one care was that when the crisis should come the revolutionary parties in all countries alike should look upon it exclusively from that point of view. At a conference in Stuttgart**

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**in 1912 he had insisted that the Socialist in each country should oppose the war, not because they might be able to stop it, but in order to publish its causes and so bring nearer that revolt of the masses against it which would be the beginning of revolution. This is the essential difference between pure pacifism and the pacifism of the Revolutionary Socialist. Lenin did not cry "Down with war," but "Down with this war, and begin the war which shall put an end to the system that made this war inevitable." He believed, I think, that under a system of Communism throughout the world there would be no motives for war, but he was quite sure that until that result could be achieved a great deal of fighting would be necessary. Hence, on the one hand his utter impatience of pure pacifist, and on the other his disgust at the moderate Socialist, who, in all countries alike voted for military credits. He saw in those votes not patriotism but treachery to the ideas to which these Socialist had nominally, like himself, subscribed. During the war he lived in a little room in the house of a shoemaker in Zürich.**

**Back to Russia in 1917.**

**In 1917, when the news of the March revolution reached Switzerland, Lenin's only thought was to get to Petrograd in the shortest possible time. If he could have flown he would've flown, though he would have preferred a wishing carpet that would make the journey in a moment, even if he had to buy it from the devil himself. Absolutely consistent with his views of the war, he regarded all the combatants as alike enemies of the Revolution, to which alone he owed allegiance. Since he could not get a magic carpet or an airplane and would have had to wait at least a fortnight to be able to come, like Trotsky, exclusively through countries either neutral or allied with Russia, he took the opportunity that offered and crossed Germany in a sealed wagon, without a qualm of conscience, because, while journeying to revolution in Petrograd, he looked farther ahead than the Germans to revolution in Berlin.**

**When he arrived he found the other parties, the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, in a majority in the Soviets, and even in his own party, which steadily grew, he had not at first the almost unquestioned authority which he afterwards attained. Thus it was not until after the**

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**Kornilov affair that he began to urge an immediate seizure of power, and the July disorders took place definitely against his advice, although they were followed by a warrant for his arrest. Even as late as August the Central Committee of his party were not with him, and he came back to Petrograd, risking arrest (he had been hiding in Finland), in order to urge his views. He remained in Petrograd, sleeping now here, now there in the workmen's quarters, until his final triumph in November. During this time he was working out in detail the plans for what was to be done as soon as the Soviets should have seized power, and when the new Government was formed there could be no question as to who was to be its President. He was the man who had urged the doing of what was now being done. He was the man who for a dozen years had prophesied precisely this event. He alone was ready with a definite program.**

**In those days the Bolsheviki were in a considerable hurry. Many of them were by no means sure that the Soviets could hold the power they had seized. In 1905 the Soviet had clung to existence only for a month. It seemed possible now that anything might happen. Hence the tumultuous and immediate issuing of decrees that were to blaze the path, to be signposts to show at least what they wished to do, even if they and the Revolution itself were to be swept away. Lenin himself, better than most of them, had estimated the opposition, but even for him, every day gained was of immense significance, because it was so much more time for the fact of the Revolution to sink into the consciousness of the world. "Each day," he said in the only rhetorical exaggeration I ever heard him use, "brings us a million new allies." He watched the calendar with his eye on the revolutions of the past, and particularly on the Paris Commune. When the Commune's limit of 70 days was passed, Lenin was thenceforward impervious to disappointment. Whatever should now happen, the Russian Revolution would be one of the great landmarks in revolutionary history.**

### **Lenin in Control.**

**The next four years of his life were lived in the full view of all the world. A few adventurous months after he left his obscure garret in Zürich he had become an almost mythical figure, one of the uncrowned rulers of**

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**Europe and Asia. Napoleon's rise to power was infinitely less dramatic. His elevation had not the smallest influence on his character. He had been a revolutionary leader in obscurity. He was a revolutionary leader now. The glare of limelight did not distract him at all. His life now was of a piece with his life formerly. His struggles were of precisely the same kind, his methods and conflict with those to which all who had known him before have become accustomed. Take, for example, the passionate dissensions in the Bolshevik party that arose out of the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. The party was divided between those who thought that they could best serve the Revolution by going down fighting and those who, like Lenin, insisted that no harm that might temporarily be done to revolutionary causes in other countries by making peace (since they could not fight successfully) would outweigh the value as a revolutionary factor of the survival of the Revolution, even if with diminished territory. The matter of debate concerned the lives of many millions of men and the future of Europe. The manner of debate was precisely that of anyone of half a dozen conflicts in back rooms when the same people had fought just as passionately over some point of pure theory, and Lenin had faced the same opposition in precisely the same way. I will remember, during the discussions that preceded the peace, waiting in the Tauris Palace and seeing Lenin, after making a speech that was in sharp contrast to the rhetorical declamations of his opponents, sitting calmly in the outer hall smiling to himself and not bothering even to observe their efforts to rebut the lump of hard argument and unpleasant facts he had left them to digest. He had done the same often enough before. And after he had got his way, I remember those opponents (Bucharin and Radek among them) coming gradually to the frankest admission that, from the revolutionary point of view, he was right, though formally it had been precisely from that point of view that they had held that he was wrong. Their mission was many times underlined when scarcely six months later, came the German revolution, which they, like Ludendorff, attributed largely to the dangerous proximity of the Russian.**

**These later years were for Lenin simply a continuation of the long series of debates within the party in which since 1901 he had taken part. People had already grown accustomed to seeing him justified by the event. They revolted, of course, but after Brest, there was not much**

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confidence in their revolts. To Brest, as much as to anything else, was due Lenin's extraordinary authority in the years that followed. "He was right then; he is probably right now." That was the thought that in one case after another brought him the votes of people even before he had persuaded their minds. Lenin's personal success in bringing about the New Economic Policy may be regarded as the last result of his victory over those who thought the Revolution would do better to die dramatically in the spring of 1918. It had much the same character. Like the peace, it undoubtedly produced a feeling of defeat in the rank-and-file of the Bolsheviks, though I do not think it did so for Lenin himself, who had never believed that it was possible other than by experiment for any revolution to find out exactly how far it could go. Lenin's authority was unshaken even by his Polish mistake, and during the famous dispute over the trade unions, when Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Bucharin proffered rival resolutions which were voted on in the local congresses throughout the country, and that of Zinoviev, to which Lenin had subscribed, obtained the largest number of votes. Trotsky with perfect accuracy bitterly complained, "They are voting less for Zinoviev's resolution than for Lenin's signature."

### **A Resolute Extremist.**

Curious superstitions arose about him in Russia as well as in the startled Europe that had begun by thinking him a German agent and then the leader of a band of brigands. None of them amused him more than the later theory of his "moderation." For the last two or three years many in Russia and almost everybody outside regarded Lenin as the head of "the moderate party" among the Bolsheviks, which, so it was thought, had a hard battle to fight against the "violent" Trotsky and the "extremist" Bucharin. Nothing seemed able to kill this theory, not even the fact that Trotsky was opposed to the wild advance on Warsaw while Lenin was in favor of it, believing that the state (which he thought was immediate revolution in Berlin, and possibly Paris) justified the risk. Perhaps now, after his death, it will be realized that in Lenin has disappeared, not the leader of the moderates but the most resolute of the extremist, whose opportunism was not temperamental but, like the seeming opportunism of a general, dictated by the circumstances of the moment, without

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

affecting in the slightest the general principles by which he was guided or the aim that was always before him. He had the opportunism of Mr. Lloyd George, together with the dour concentration on his aim of Sir James Craig. Moderate Lenin never was. "If there is a 25% chance of revolution anywhere," said a Communist who knew him well, "Lenin will take that chance. But if there is less than that, he will behave precisely as if there were no chance at all."

### **Lenin's Revolutionary Theory.**

It is, however, a little dangerous to talk of "aim" in connection with Lenin. The key to the whole man is in his profound conviction that revolution is an inevitable process and not an artificial one. It never occurred to him that he or any other individual could "make revolution" anywhere. He merely believed that revolution everywhere was inevitable sooner or later, and that as many people as possible should be ready for it when it came. He did not imagine that he could "make workmen revolt." As he said himself, he was ready "confidently to leave that to their employers and the price of living." He was almost too consistent to be a great man, and yet his very consistency, his unswerving allegiance to the formulas he had adopted in youth, was in itself a source of his unmistakable greatness of attitude. Believing in inevitable processes, he attributed absolutely nothing to himself, and so was entirely free from any tickling sense of personal failure or success. It was just this in him that made him in a sense invulnerable. If the Revolution had been suppressed four years ago, it would never have occurred to him to blame individuals. He would merely have thought, "This was a wave, but not the ninth wave," and would have gone to the scaffold in serene confidence that sooner or later, it 10, 50, or 200 years, the ninth wave would overwhelmingly arrive. He was in the same way free from the politicians fear of acknowledging past mistakes. His New Years wish, expressed over the telephone to a friend, was: "May we commit fewer stupidities this year than we did last."

Lenin's private life was simple and without reproach. He was devoted to his wife, who during later years was an invalid suffering from that disease which causes a swelling of the eyeballs. The first words he

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spoke when he recovered consciousness after he was shot in 1918 were an effort to put a stop to the reign of terror which weaker spirits had inaugurated in their panic after that event. The men who worked with him would do anything for him. The workmen in whose rooms he hid in 1917 thought him a saint, but this was simply due to the fact that, while he had about him the air which made even the simplest people realize that he was a man very much out of the ordinary, he took considerable delight in washing dishes and minding the babies. People have written of his "mirthless laugh." Mirthless laughs are not infectious, and Lenin's was extremely so except perhaps when he was amused by his actual interlocutor. The quality in him which was taken for coldness was the quality which makes some artists seemed cold. Lenin had the artists "amorfatae," and was never inclined to pretend to himself or to anyone else that he saw a happy ending where none was. He valued one virtue above all others, the ability to look facts clearly in the face. For this he praised Lloyd George, for this he praised Colonel Robins, for this he praised Mr. J. M. Keynes, though he held each of these in his own way to be in the camp of the enemy. It was the one thing he tried to do himself though his buoyant temperament combined with his consistent theories to lead him again and again to grotesque misjudgment as to things which he could know only by report. Until, after four years of enormous pressure, his brain grew tired he was certainly a happy man. Few leaders have been so well loved even by those of his followers whom he most mercilessly chastised with jest and argument. Nobody had anything against him personally, however much they might hate the Revolution as a whole. "He at least is a genuine idealist," said people for whom the Revolution was simply so much brigandage and murder.

In Russia the commonest phrase one heard from anti—Bolsheviks was, "It will be much worse if Lenin goes." People who hated his ideas were quite definitely afraid of his personal collapse. He had sat in the Kremlin long enough to produce a feeling of stability. Few people inside Russia desired anymore disorderly jolts in the progress of Russian history. Lenin, the "leader of revolt," became in his way before his death a sort of guarantee of a quiet life. Something might happen, desirable or not, but in the meanwhile it was possible to keep going. So long as Lenin was

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**still there one could be sure that it would not happen this week. To exhausted people that meant a good deal.**

**MG. January 24, 1924. #1**

**Future Of The Soviet Leadership.  
A Council Of Three?  
Trotsky And Party Discipline.**

**Moscow, Wednesday.**

**The question of a successor to Lenin hardly arises, because for so long there have been three Vice Presidents who have done their work without his help. I am told it is not impossible that this system may continue. If not, my personal opinion is that Rykov at the moment has the best chances of the Presidency.**

**The Communists, in spite of their recognition of Trotsky's gifts, cannot forget that he only joined the party in 1917, and that his strongly individualistic temperament has not been submitted to the long course of party discipline that has formed the others. Stalin, in the party discussion, threw this at him the other day rather more violently than usual, but it would be a serious misjudgment of the position to assume that the recent dispute will in any way affect Trotsky's attitude now. A telegram has been sent to him asking that, if the doctor permits, he may return from the Caucasus, where he is convalescing, in time for Lenin's funeral. He will certainly at this juncture make a united front with the party.**

**Lenin's death, as I said yesterday, was entirely unexpected, and no doctors were in the house when he was taken ill. Indeed, his death is partially due to his confidence in his own recovered strength. His wife, Nadezhda Konstantinovna, and Bucharin, who was also at Gorky for his health sake, were with him at the end.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. January 24, 1924. #2**

**Lenin Lying – In – State.  
Body Brought Back To Moscow.  
Coffin Draped In Red.  
Vast Procession Through The Snow.**

**Moscow, Wednesday.**

**I have just returned from Saratov station, where I witnessed the arrival of Lenin's red-draped coffin. It is impossible not to notice the revolting self – assertion of the mechanical circumstances which in our time are the inevitable accompaniment of a great man's death. Here were men who had worked with Lenin for 20 years (and every man who worked with him thought of him as a personal friend) meeting not that intensely living figure they had known, but the coffin that destroyed at last the hope so recently held of his return to the leadership. And as the train came in, drawn by an engine with fir trees and drapings of red and black, it was seen that in front of it was pursed a fur-clad, muffled kinematograph operator, mechanically grinding at his camera.**

**No Speeches.**

**The train stopped. Other kinematographs began to work. More were handed out from the actual wagon, the photographers, clicking their cameras, careless in their technical occupation of the profound feeling which made the scene almost unbearable for the man in whose faces they pushed their insolent machines.**

**Yesterday and last night at Gorki friends of Lenin had watched by the body. It was brought out of the railway wagon and carried down the platform by some of those who had known him best, Kamenev, Stalin, Tmsky, Bucharin, Zinoviev, Kalinin, Rykov, Enukidze. There were no speeches. The band played a funeral march. From far away outside the station one could hear the song for the fallen sung here and there by crowds waiting to join the procession to carry Lenin to the Hall of Trade**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Unions, where in the old days he often used to speak and for now he will lie in state till the funeral.**

**Bare-headed in the Icy Cold.**

**On the square outside the station were lancers, their lances, up right in the snow, carrying black pennons. Masses of people with mourning banners were waiting in the side-streets to join in the three - mile march into Moscow. People stood bareheaded, with the thermometer 14 degrees below zero, while the coffin passed, and then fell into their places behind it.**

**I remembered a similar scene when the body of the murdered Vorovsky was brought to Moscow last year, but whereas Vorovsky was known only to a few, there would be hardly a man or woman in that whole procession who would not have sometimes seen Lenin; very many who were feeling his loss as a loss to the cause to which they were giving their own lives; and many who, knowing him personally, felt, as one said to be, "suddenly fatherless." The only other instance I can remember of such universal mourning was the funeral of Queen Victoria, when also there was this mingling of personal affection with the feeling that something entirely irreplaceable had been taken away.**

**From now until the moment of burial the body will lie in state day and night with a guard of honor of four Communist, who will guard the coffin for 10 minutes and then be replaced by another four.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. January 25, 1924**

**Soviet Closing The Ranks.**

**Trotsky's Message.**

**Day And Night Procession Past Lenin's Bier.**

**Moscow, Thursday.**

**Trotsky, as was expected, has immediately emphasized the solidarity of the party and his own solidarity with it. He has telegraphed from Tiflis railway station a short letter on Lenin's death, in which, after speaking of the way in which Lenin's death "has orphaned the party and orphaned the working class," he uses a phrase significant at this moment after the recent party discussions and resolutions: "Shall we find the road? With the collective thoughts and collective will of the party we shall find it." And ends with a call to close the ranks.**

**That at the present moment is most in the minds of the Communist leaders, who, had they foreseen Lenin's death, would never have allowed the outspokenness and vituperation of the late discussion, and who naturally feel that the outside world must believe them to be all at sixes and sevens. The oppositionists in the late disputes are being given a part at least as prominent as that of the orthodox in the ceremonies connected with Lenin's death. The orthodox and oppositionists side-by-side carried his coffin. Both sides claimed the support of Lenin in their disputes. All were Leninist, and, even in their internal disputes, remember the sturdy polemic against his best friends in which Lenin himself was always ready to engage whenever necessary.**

**Lenin's Secret.**

**The papers this morning print tributes from most of the leaders besides hundreds from groups and institutions. The most interesting touching is that of Bucharin, who, asking what was the secret of Lenin's power as a mass leader, says:**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**“First of all, his extraordinary sensitiveness to the needs of the masses. It was as if Lenin had some unknown sixth sense that allowed him, with delicate ear, to listen to the grass growing under the earth, to the running and murmuring of subterranean streamlets, to thoughts and to ideas wandering through the heads of the earth's myriad workers. He patiently, carefully listened to the soldier of the old army, the peasants from distant borders, or the metalworker. From chance talk with old village women he guessed the pulse of the peasantry. From a question asked by a workman at a meeting he, the wise man of our party, saw and felt along what roads for running the ideas of the working class. From each man by some method that was his alone he drew out the thousand threads of the whole bundle of social connections with their elaborate plaitings and knots, and before his eyes was a picture of the life of millions and a picture of class relations in the whole immense country.”**

**Bucharin's whole article reflects the curiously personal affection felt for Lenin by everyone who came in contact with him. Everybody has the same tale to tell of his first meeting with him, and last night, waiting in the endless cue to pass by Lenin's lying – in – state, it was impossible not to feel the extraordinary affection with which he has been regarded, and the pride of each one was able to say he had seen him.**

**Between one and two in the morning my turn came to pass by the bier, which lay in the center of the columned hall, the lamps on the walls clouded with crêpe and scarlet. The bier is dark crimson. Lenin lay on it with face exposed, very pale but calm, more like the Lenin I remember in 1919 than him whom I saw last year. Mrs. Lenin was standing beside him, and while people walked silently by her, as at the station when the body arrived, ghoulisn cinematographers were imperturbably at their work. The procession of people going to see Lenin for the last time began to form early in the day. All day and all night it was passing by the bier, still stretches through many streets, is continually growing, and will no doubt continue through this night also.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. January 25, 1924.**

**After Lenin.**

**Policy Surviving His Death.**

**Chicherin's Tribute.**

**Good Foreign Relations A Principal Aim.**

**Moscow, Wednesday.**

**Chicherin and Rothstein received newspaper correspondents today. Rothstein referred to the recent party discussion and the way in which it was misunderstood abroad, where it was assumed that the party was divided into Right and Left. Leninites and anti-- Leninites. He pointed out that Lenin, who since his illness only saw people whom he himself expressed a wish to see, had been visited most frequently by Preobrazhensky and Pyatakov (who frequently played the piano for him), who are both prominent members of the recent so-called Opposition. With regards to Trotsky, he pointed out that he had made the October Revolution hand-in-hand with Lenin at a time when the supposed orthodox Leninites Kamenev and Zinoviev were both against it, and that Radek was one of the first to join Lenin in his attitude during the Great War.**

**At different periods different party members have been on the Right or the Left, and the real unity of the party has been unaffected by these discussions and differences. The members know each other too well, well enough in fact to indulge in a violence of polemic which would speedily wreck an ordinary political party.**

**Chicherin talked mainly on the political effect of Lenin's departure, pointing out that for over a year Lenin had taken no part in affairs, and that the Government was continuing its work and policy without the slightest change. The policy outlined by Lenin himself had survived his illness and would survive his death.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

### **Lenin's Peace Efforts.**

**Chicherin showed how much of Russian policy was definitely initiated by Lenin. It was Lenin's personal work that the idea of peace was the basis of Russian foreign policy. It was Lenin who insisted on an absolute disregard of a possible appearance of feebleness in continually proposing peace. From August, 1918, to August, 1919, there were about 10 separate peace proposals, after which opened the regular peace offensive agreement coming first with the Border States and then with others. It was Lenin who insisted that foreign policy must have as its aim economic well-being, connecting the idea of peace with that of economic cooperation with other nations. It was Lenin who at the beginning of 1918 planned making concessions to foreign capital. It was Lenin who connected the idea of the recognition of debts with the granting of credits, for the simple reason that the payment of debts demands the economic reconstruction of Russia, and economic reconstruction demands credit. He referred to Lenin's attitude towards the Prinkipo proposals, towards the Bullitt's semi-official mission, and his intense interest in the negotiations with each State to make peace with Russia. "Remember the interest and anxiety with which he followed Krassin's first visit to England to make possible English to trade with the Russian Cooperatives, a pious fraud disguising behind the Cooperatives what were actually the beginnings of Russia's trade relation with Great Britain. The interest he showed in relations with America can be testified by Colonel Raymond Robins."**

**He said that when the Afghan Extraordinary Envoy arrived in 1919 Lenin himself gave him a very long audience, talking over the whole of Russia's relation with Afghanistan. During the Turkish negotiations Lenin demanded a most detailed report of every incident. With Persia also, it was due to Lenin's personal persuasion that the Russians based their Persian policy on the return to the Persian people of all that Russia possessed in Persia. Lenin allowed nothing to stand in the way of good relations with other States. "When Joffe told him he might have to wear court dress in Germany to go to court, Lenin told him he must not hesitate to put on a petticoat if that was necessary for the cause of peace."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**In the internal policy it was Lenin who, long before the Revolution – more than 20 years ago – had insisted that the fundamental idea of revolution in Russia must be united domination of the urban workers and peasants. Lenin's death in no way brings any alteration to this system or to these main ideas, which are and will be the very foundation of the Soviet Government policy.**

**MG. January 26, 1924.**

**New Labour Ministers In Russian Eyes.  
What Chicherin Thinks Of Them.  
Doubts Of Mr. McDonald's Foreign Policy.  
Gladstone's Example At Alexandria.**

**Moscow, Friday.**

**M. Chicherin, the Soviet Commissary for Foreign Affairs, received me between one and three this morning and gave me his impressions of the advent of a Labour Administration in Great Britain. He said: –**

**"The very fact of the Labour Party coming into power for the first time in Great Britain, the country where the social fabric is strongest, is one of primary importance that will form an outstanding date in the annals of history. Nevertheless, I do not think that at this juncture the Labour Government can achieve any great work of lasting importance, because without a majority in Parliament it will be unable to carry out any truly independent policy. I think also that most of the working class leaders who have now come to power are so imbued with the spirit of prudence and of gradual improvement that even if the Labour Government were unhampered by dependence on the Liberals it would achieve only the first steps in the direction of a working-class policy. In the archives of our Ministry I have read dispatches and letters of the old Czarist Ambassador Baron Brunow, an able and most perspicacious observer, who at the period of the reform movement in the 60s, when a great many**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

people were extremely afraid of 'those who live in these small houses,' laughed at these fears, and said: 'The old ship has gone through many tempests. The waves are tossing her, but she goes steadily onward.' I think he would have laughed in the same way as those who expressed panic theories at the advent of Mr. MacDonald.

### **Mr. MacDonald And Gladstone.**

"I had personal intercourse with Mr. MacDonald during my stay in London, and have the best memories of his great courteousness, although I have myself an incomparably more extreme position with regard to the war. Even in the Second International, in which we were together, we belonged to different wings, but I have always had a very high appreciation of his talents, capacity, and idealism. I cannot forget that he sat at the feet of Keir Hardie, who came from the ranks of the workers and remains one of the great figures of the Labour movement.

"I cannot, however, observe without some apprehension his advent to the Foreign Office. I remember another man whose oratory had the same moral philanthropic character, the same religious undertones concerning foreign-policy – namely, Gladstone. I cannot forget that Gladstone, the man who had the strongest condemnation of violence towards weaker nations, the man who when in Opposition had opposed colonial expansion, and particularly opposed English colonial policy in regard to Egypt, was himself the man who bombarded Alexandria. With the best wishes for the success of Mr. MacDonald, I think I can allow myself to quote the example of Gladstone's colonial policy with the Latin words, 'Vestiginterrent.'

### **Mr. Snowden.**

"Not all the other members of the new Cabinet are personally known to me. Mr. Snowden has not always been kind to our Government, but I shall never forget the great help he gave us in London when we were emigrants tracked by the police, and he was the chairman of our committee for political prisoners in Siberia. I hope his own access to

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**power will give him a more accurate understanding of the historical role of our Government.**

**Mr. Henderson.**

**"In the new Labour Government there are two sections, trade union leaders and intellectuals. With Mr. Henderson I had only one interview in my life. I was sitting in Brixton Prison, and was going to be exchanged for Sir George Buchanan [when Chicherin's release was refused Trotsky said that until Chicherin was free Buchanan would not be allowed to leave Russia]. The day before I left Mr. Henderson visited me in prison in order to ask me to persuade the Bolshevik Government to continue the war some weeks longer and thus give him and the Left parties in England a chance for a new attempt to bring about peace. I transmitted his words in Petersburg, but the Allied Governments left unanswered our proposals for general peace negotiations, and, in spite of the efforts of Mr. Bruce Lockhart, refused us any help towards continuing our defense. I remember at that period Mr. Henderson showed great friendliness towards our Revolutionary Government.**

**Mr. Tom Shaw.**

**"Mr. Tom Shaw was one of the delegates who came to Moscow, and though dissatisfied with many things in our country he still advocated the resumption of relations with Soviet Russia. It is difficult for me to make general remarks about the trade union leaders who have now come to power because, so far as I know British politics, the trade union movement has no unique foreign-policy, and every trade union leader had his own policy, Tillett one, Smillie another, and Clynes a third. I am very impatient now to learn what will be the common foreign-policy of these leaders working together. I can say at least that there is common ground on which we are sure to meet, and that is general peace. I cherish liveliest hopes that, together with the Government in which these Labour leaders have seats, we shall succeed in smoothing down world conflicts and attain general settlement of big questions which are causing trouble.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

### **The "Intellectuals."**

**"Among the intellectuals I am personally acquainted with Trevelyan, whom I met in Parliament when the four delegates of the Kerensky Government arrived in London seeking for democracy in Europe with a lamp. They found it in Trevelyan and Ponsonby, and I remember lunching with them all on the terrace of the House of Commons.**

**"I have read with great profit the works of Mr. Sidney Webb, though I have never been a Fabian and have always had other views about the construction of human society. Mr. Webb and his wife have warned us against the coming of a servile State, and I think that to the servile State the Soviet State is the only alternative.**

**"Brigadier General Thomson has been in Moscow, when I had the pleasure of talking with him on the repatriation of fugitives and other humanitarian matters. I am glad that he will be able to apply his humanitarian views to the control of the air force. I have heard about Lord Parmoor from one of the most distinguished representatives of old Liberalism, Lord Sheffield, with whom I had the advantage of passing several hours, and expect he will bring to the new Government a similar broad progressive outlook. I have never had any personal relations with Lord Haldane, but I have long had great respect for him because he was so hated by Bottomley, and to be hated by Bottomley was for me almost the hallmark of respectability.**

### **British Offensive In Asia.**

**"It will be a very great benefit for humanity if these men, whose antecedents justify high hopes, effectively put an end to the policy of constant offensive against us of the British political machine in Asia. The so-called forward policy in Afghanistan is a serious threat to our peaceful existence in Asia, and indeed, from Constantinople to Tokyo we everywhere encounter the hostile activity of British representatives and agents. Our principal desire is the opportunity of peaceful development. The past life of the men now in power in Great Britain inclines me to believe that this desire is theirs also, and that the old**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**English motto 'Live and let live' is one on which we can shake hands. I may say finally that I hope the Labour Ministry will not behave in such a way as to enable its Liberal successors to overshadow them in a beneficent work for humanity."**

**MG. January 26, 1924.**

**Russia's Sorrow.**

**Moscow Crowded With Mourners.**

**Peter And Lenin.**

**Moscow, Friday.**

**At 4 o'clock this morning the streets even in the business parts of the town were crowded with people going towards the Hall of Trade Unions, where the body of Lenin lies or returning from seeing him for the last time. The great squares near the building were black with people waiting their turns to go in and walk past the bier. Here and there small bonfires threw a fantastic light on the faces of militia men warming themselves at the blaze, and on the slowly passing procession. The thermometer stood at 21° below zero. Reaumur, and people in felt boots and blankets were marking time on the crisp snow in the effort to keep warm. Even this severe cold did not deter the people, and the queues, zigzagging backwards and forwards in the squares, stretched along the street far up the Tverskaya in one direction, the Red Square in another, and in the third to the Cathedral of the Saviour.**

**The stations were all crowded with peasants from the country making the pilgrimage to the bier. Every train comes in packed with them, and they are sleeping on the station floors. Telegrams from distant parts beg for the postponement of the funeral until people from those districts can reach Moscow. One Moscow district put in a suggestion that the body should not be buried at all, but preserved under glass.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Letters of condolence have been sent to the Central Committee by Bishop Antoinin, the Metropolitan Evdokim, and the All –Russian Alliance of Baptist. Private persons have been ordering Masses for the soul of Lenin in the various churches and chapels.**

**The universality of the mourning for this man, who seven years ago was almost unknown in Russia and living in poverty in Switzerland, is almost unbelievable, I suppose, to people not here. I have just heard a non–Bolshevik, who stood all last night in the cold to see Lenin, say, with regard to the renaming of Petrograd – Leningrad: "I'm sorry they have done it. Russia has had two great men, Peter and Lenin. Each opened a new era, and we can afford them a town apiece."**

**MG. January 28, 1924.**

**At The Grave Of Lenin.**

**Greatest Funeral Procession Ever Seen In Moscow.**

**Terrific Cold Braved By Numberless Mourners.**

**Widow's Impressive Speech In Congress.**

**Moscow, Sunday**

**At midnight on Saturday the doors of the Hall of Trade Unions were closed and the procession passed Lenin's bier which had not ceased for a moment day and night since Wednesday, temporarily ended. At six this morning 600 wreaths, which had been brought to the bier left in the Hall of Trade Unions were given out to the delegates to be carried in the final procession and laid on the sepulcher. Workmen have been busy day and night preparing this sepulcher, and some have refused to leave it and have been there two days and nights on end. At eight the gathering in the Hall of Trade Unions of the Diplomatic Corps began.**

**At nine the bier was carried out of the Hall across into the Red Square by a guard of honor, including workmen from different factories, Peasants, and Communist leaders, among them Kamenev, Kalinin,**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**Bucharin, Tomsky, Chicherin, Pyatakov, Sapronov, and Krassin. These were divided into five groups, each of which carried the coffin part of the way. The body was placed on a high pedestal before the mausoleum, which is under the Kremlin wall opposite the wall – known statue of Minin Pojarsky. On this pedestal, which is over 8 feet high, the bier was visible from every part of the huge square. From early morning processions from all parts of the town were forming and passing ceaselessly into the square, past the bier, and out of the square again. At 4 o'clock the coffin was taken into the mausoleum.**

**Throughout the whole of Russia all transport by road, rail, and water now stops for five minutes. For five minutes the whole life of the country is arrested. There is a military salute of canon gun by gun in the smaller garrisons, battery by battery in Petrograd and Moscow, white flags are lowered, and military orchestras play a funeral march. For three minutes throughout the whole of Russia there is a continuous blast of factory sirens to symbolize the fact that Lenin was the leader of the working class. The sirens fade into silence, the guns continue until, when the last gun dies away, the troops dismiss and the ceremony is over.**

**But the procession, only temporarily stopped, begins again. Under the glow of powerful lamps, crowds pass throughout the night. The fire brigade decided to use every torch in Moscow, and is carrying flaming tributes through the city past the grave. The mausoleum is so built that people can pass through it, and so that those thousands hurrying from the country and unable to reach Moscow in time can look through the glass window at the coffin at that quiet face.**

### **Beside The Bier.**

**At seven this morning the streets were dark, but by 8 o'clock it was growing light. Watch fires in the streets were burning pale, and the half moon was dull in the mist over the white, frozen city. It was one of the coldest days I ever remember in Moscow, over 60 degrees frost being registered. Troops were moving through the streets under a canopy of frozen breath, militia men warming themselves by watch fires. Small**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**groups of men and women were beating their breast with their hands, stomping frozen feet, and hurrying towards the center.**

**Only a few besides members of the Central Executive Committee and the Diplomatic Corps were allowed into the Hall of Trade Unions to witness the last ceremony there. A few had arrived when I got there. In the middle of the hall, under the tall palms, the body of Lenin, in dull khaki, lay on the crimson catafalque guarded by a group of his old comrades. From time to time the guard was changed. All the guards stood motionless, some looking straight before them as on the parade, others unable to turn their faces from the pale, sleeping face of their dead leader. Dzerzhinsky, in a brown leather coat, stood with bent head like a Franciscan monk. Stalin stood with arms folded iron like his name. Bucharin, beside him, was still for once, like a figure carved in wax. Revolutionary banners hung on the walls, and among them in white letters on black were the words, "Ilyich is dead; his work lives."**

**Gradually the hall filled with Communist, all in ordinary working clothes. Only in the group of diplomats, where beside Mr. Hodgson and Mr. Peters were men of almost every nationality, wore their clothes that in any way reminded one of ordinary funerals. Here and there about the hall a summer lightning of white fire for the benefit of the kinematograph operators brilliantly lit up the white faces of bearded peasants in sheepskin coats, leather – jacketed workmen, and dull khaki uniforms.**

**Suddenly a stir ran through the hall, and all stiffened to immobility. Mrs. Lenin was standing by the bier looking at Lenin's face, calm, dry eyed, as if unconscious that he and she were not alone in the room. There was absolute silence, then funeral music, a requiem followed by the International, after which, when the orchestra had finished, a revolutionary dirge was sung by all in the hall, while soldiers, even outside the hall and in the passages, stood at attention. I had a curious feeling that I was present at the founding of a new religion.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **Procession To The Tomb.**

**There were no speeches. The silence was absolute. The only jarring note was given by a solitary anti-religious fanatic who wandered wild eyed about the outskirts of the crowd, with a long red scarf hung about him like the garment of officiating priest with a Communist manifesto (I think) printed on a card and fastened on his breast. No one among the mourners had eyes for him, and he presently wandered out of the hall. After the dirge, the lid of the coffin, with flat top and sloping sides made of wood and covered with red silk, with three windows on the top and side, was placed on the coffin, and all except the guard of honor and the chief mourners walked silently out into the freezing air, where the sudden terrific cold struck one like a blow.**

**We waited for the coffin and fell in behind it. The cold was such that only a very few with matted hair were able to remove their fur caps. People began walking with their hands at the salute, but presently found even that impossible. We walked between lines of soldiers, each one with helmet, face, and shoulders veiled in hoar frost from his own breath. Four times the little procession stopped, while the bearers gave place to others. Slowly it passed by the old Town Hall and mounted the slope beside the Kremlin wall into the huge square.**

**Above us on the right were the high walls of the Kremlin, with its battlements, fantastic turrets, and gate-ways. High above them, on the building where sits the Council of Peoples Commissars, was a solitary flagstaff, upon which, in a pale blue mist, hung at half – mast, a dropping flag and one red light. Before us, toneless in the mist, was the bizarre Church of St. Basil, which in the sunlight is a blaze of different colors. Lines of soldiers made alleyways through the square.**

**On our left was the old Chinese town, where in the long past was the house of English traders who were here for the death of Ivan the Terrible. Far away, high in the Kremlin wall, was the little balcony from which Ivan was accustomed to look down on executions in the square; where Peter in later times used to descend to take a more active personal part.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**The Red Square has seen many terrible sights, but none more impressive than this small band of Communist leaders carrying Lenin to his grave.**

**Slowly the procession passed the graves of dead Communist. Before them, close under the wall, was a huge dark mass, which, as we came nearer, we saw was a mausoleum built temporarily of wood in the form of a great cube with lesser cubes at the corner where were the entrances to the vault beneath. The whole of the central mass was piled 20 feet high with wreaths. Immediately before it was a high platform, with of red – covered pedestal and a steep stairway leading up to the rails on either hand.**

### **Mutilating Frost.**

**The procession stopped. Looking around I saw Kamenev, the Communist – in – Chief, muffled to the ears, his huge black mustache white with frost. Close by him was Budenny, the Cossack leader, accustomed to terrific frost and seemingly indifferent to cold. Then the coffin was carried up the stairway and laid on the top of the pedestal. A small group went up to the platform and stood there, dimly visible in the steam of their own breath. Stalin, Kamenev, and Tsiurupa stood at the front of the platform, Mrs. Lenin at the back. Someone read a proclamation agreed upon by the Central Executive. There were no speeches. The coffin lay alone, visible from every corner of the square.**

**The first part of today's ceremony is over, and the march past, district by district, of workingmen and women and peasants from the country has begun. The cold is such that the soldiers are stamping continually where they stand, and delegations passing through the square break into a run. The chief of the militia has had the whole of his face frozen, and may lose nose and cheeks. I fear he will not be the only sufferer. It has been necessary to issue absolute prohibition against bringing children.**

**It is now midday. The sun, like a dim red fire, is trying in vain to pierce the white mist that hangs over the frozen town. I slipped through the ranks of soldiery to the Chinese town. From the edge of the Red Square I looked back over the broad plane of snow, where stood batteries in**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

readiness for the salute, with ambulances and mounted troopers in small groups, to the distant Kremlin wall and bier with its little group of guards. Already, like a river steaming under a summer sun, a dark stream of human beings under a canopy of freezing breath in this tremendous called had begun to flow between the dull sandy banks of soldiery, a single line of whom, changing continually kept the stream in place, preventing it massing in the square and making impossible a repetition of the Khodynka tragedy at the coronation of the Tsar. The dark red banners seem to be swept along like upright trees by a human river, swaying in the stream, drooping, disappearing as they passed the bier, to rise probably again beyond.

### **Greatest Funeral in Moscow.**

I ran through the Chinese town to force the circulation into my frozen feet, and then, coming out through the Chinese wall, walked from point to point in the town to see the processions, which from early morning had been converging from the outskirts towards the square. Everywhere there was astonishing order. Side streets, debouching on those by which the processions were passing were closed to prevent the processions at any point swelling beyond control. Militia men in their new blue coats and little red kepis with gray fur flap turned down over the neck and ears, were standing in groups, which were changed every few minutes to allow them to hurry to watch – fires, where, standing in the pale smoke, they thawed their ice – caked cheeks.

And in the main streets, in spite of this appalling cold, were the greatest processions Moscow has ever seen. District by district, factory by factory, people of all nationalities, everybody, regardless of appearances, muffled in the warmest things they had, the whole town seem to be moving towards the square. Even political prisoners were released on parade to take part in the funeral. The Communist wore black bands edged with scarlet round their arms, but almost everyone I saw was wearing some sign of mourning, and even in the fashionable Kuznetzki Bridge Street well-dressed, obviously non-Communist, ladies were wearing mourning favorites. Small boys were selling little portraits

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

of Lenin which people pinned on their breast, and at some points small paper portraits were being handed out free, and eagerly claimed.

Towards 3 o'clock, by a circuitous route, I began to make my way back to the square, crossing procession after procession. At half – past three I came out through Ilyinka into the Red Square and walked across the snow to the banks of that still flowering stream which, since 10:00 this morning, has not checked for a moment. The whole of the lower roof of the Basil Cathedral was crowded with people, and tiny figures were crowded together between each of the thousand battlements on the Kremlin wall. As I came nearer I saw the little group on the platform with the bier, some of whom have been there continuously – Kamenev, Stalin, Zinoviev, Rykov standing by the coffin Bucharin just at the top of the stairway: Mrs. Lenin, her head bowed and hidden in the deep collar of her coat. Guards of honor were changing continually every few minutes, replacing those who stood rigidly at the salute, since to stand bareheaded would have been futile suicide.

### **Salute Of Guns And Factory Sirens.**

Over the Spassky Gate the gold hands moving on the black clock face crept nearer to four. Just as the sun behind the Kremlin walls the coffin was lifted and carried down into the Mausoleum. The clock struck. Like the role of a big kettle drum a battery fired the first salute, and from far away through the white mist over the city came the droning hollow note of the Sirens, which continued while the clock struck in clear, indifferent, bell-like tones, as if insisting on the contrast between time and man's mortality. The drum – role of the battery tried in vain to draw on the last notes of the great clock. The sirens continued. Then from the edge of the square and from far away in the streets of the town a band was playing the revolutionary dirge and "International."

During all this time the processions in the square stood without moving. The minute hand crept on and at five minutes past the hour Muralov, the Town Commandant, appeared on the platform and with the gesture of his arms indicated that the processions could move again. He went down. There was a rush of cinematographers who, in a moment or two,

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**have placed their machine where the bier had laid and were busy at their work.**

**The funeral is over and Lenin is in his tomb. A Red Army soldier beside me who lost a leg in the Civil War said to a comrade. "It will be long before we can realize he is dead. For so long we have not seen him, but known that he was there, and now he is not there anymore." I left the square. So enormous were the processions that still have to pass, it is most unlikely they finished by midnight.**

**MG. February 4, 1924 #1**

**Russia's Reply.**

**Eager Acceptance Of British Friendship.**

**Special Interview With Chicherin.**

**Complaint Of Delayed "Normal Conditions."**

**Tribute To British Political Foresight.**

**Moscow, Sunday.**

**Mr. Chicherin, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, has given me an exclusive interview in which he spoke as follows: –**

**"Our Soviet Congress characterize the recognition of the Soviet Republics by Great Britain as an historical event. This is quite true, and it is impossible to exaggerate the role which this event will play in the development of the world situation. Two factors in Great Britain have brought about this result. The first was the unanimous demand of the working class, which, in the form of unemployment, feels bitterly the present disruption of the world's economic system and, with the whole strength of its just instincts, strives for the only real remedy – namely, the drawing of Soviet Russia into completely normal intercourse with Great Britain. The second factor was the far –seeing enlightened**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**comprehension of the most thoughtful elements in English political quarters.**

**"From the first beginning of our Republic I have unceasingly pointed out the unparalleled flexibility, capacity, and adaptation of the best section of English ruling quarters. Many times, for example, when the British Government, alone among the Great Powers, supported Estonia in her desire to conclude peace with Soviet Russia, I pointed out that on the Thames there are most long – cited statesmen who can perceive in advance the coming of new forces and the need of adaptation to those new forces. Compromise has long been the great art of British statesmanship. In the first days of our existence, when other Governments showed unmitigated hatred, the British Government alone among Western Powers showed some willingness to compromise with our new-born Government. Even when the wave of intervention was at its height Mr. Lloyd George raised his voice for agreement with Soviet Russia, and the Liberal press, which represented a far – seeing section of British public opinion, has never ceased, even in the worst periods, to denounce intervention and speak out for agreement with our Government.**

### **British Initiative in Trade Relations.**

**"The resumption of trade relations with Russia was the result of the initiative of the British Government, and through all the vicissitudes of the relations between our two countries the truly Liberal press never ceased to advocate conciliation and agreement. Working – class opinion and enlightened political thought are the two forces which brought about the present admirable result. I completely concur with the Liberal press in thinking this the wisest step yet taken by the British Government after the war. It is a great example of the genuine statesmanship which understands the powerful psychological forces that underlie the policies of States. The men who advocated and carried through this step obviously understand the effect it will have on the minds of the 130 millions of the great Soviet Federation. As the result of the enormous interest which the masses in Russia show for foreign politics Great Britain will forth-with enjoy such popularity as will be a**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**real political factor. It can be said that with a single stroke she has strengthened her international position and has altered the combination of forces on the political chess – board.**

**"But the wise thing must be thoroughly wise, and must not be left unfinished. Wise things cannot be done half-heartedly. Hamlet could never have been a real statesman. Why, then, in the British Note announcing such a grand decision is there a sort of intermixture of limitations of that original decision? Instead of leaving a feeling of full and complete satisfaction and joy, the British Note leaves in the mind some doubt and a feeling of vagueness of purpose. What mean these subtle distinctions between recognition and normal conditions? After reading the first paragraph of the Note I thought it gave us full recognition, but in the second paragraph I found that normal conditions between us will be restored only after vexed questions about debts, private property, and so on have been solved. We have recognition, but not normal conditions. What does recognition imply if not normal relations between the States in question? Why cannot we at once nominate an ambassador? Obviously, because there are no normal conditions between us. What, then, remains of recognition? What demon of doubt with his icy breath blasted of the grand resolution of full recognition? Whose unlucky influence has, at least in part, tarnished the guilt of the wise historical event of the restoration of full and complete friendly intercourse between our peoples?**

**"But let us hope for the best. Let us go on with our work. From the first day when Mr. Krassin appeared in London we have striven for opportunities of thrashing out all our differences and mutual suspicions. Until now British rulers have evaded the work of complete outspokenness. We have much to say. Lord Curzon's diplomacy has not been tender towards us, and I am especially glad to have as partner in this full and complete frankness Mr. MacDonald, the best friend of the much – regretted Keir Hardie.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

### **Relations with the East.**

**"Mr. MacDonald will understand that unbreakable friendship for the peoples of the East does not mean aggressiveness on our part, but, on the contrary, means the putting in practice of the principles which the great Keir Hardie so magnificently advocated. In so far as my friend Mr. Clifford Allen and my friend Mr. Fenner Brockway are struggling for peace and brotherhood among nations I may say that the Soviet Government are supporting the same cause.**

**"When Gladstone, who tried in vain, but still tried, to put in practice the idea of a non-aggressive Little England, strove for agreement with Russia, he had before him the extremely aggressive Russia of Alexander III., and his Copenhagen interview with Russian statesman was doomed to failure in view of the incurable greed of Russian Tsarism. Mr. MacDonnell is in a better position, for he is faced not by a greedy Tsarist Russia, but by a great federated Republic of peace, which writes on its banner: 'Full independence, full freedom and self-disposal for every nation.' Alexander III. In conciliation was no match for Gladstone. To Mr. MacDonnell I can put the opposite question and ask: 'Will his love of peace and his conciliatory spirit be as great as our own?'"**

**MG. February 4, 1924. #2**

### **Rykov's Career.**

**Moscow, Saturday.**

**Alexei Ivanovitch Rykov, Lenin's successor as chairman of the Council of Peoples Commissaries, is the son of a peasant. He was born in 1881 at Saratoff , and brought up in the village of Koukourka. He entered Kazan University, but was expelled and arrested for joining the Revolutionary party. He was placed in solitary confinement for nine months and then exiled to Siberia. He escaped and joined Lenin in Paris, living by making translations and doing clerical work. He returned to Russia but again he was exiled, and again escaped.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**After the revolution he became the Commissar of Internal Affairs, then President of the Council of National Economy, then Vice President of the Council of Labour and Defense. For a long time he has been Vice President of the Council of Peoples Commissars. He has been a member of the Central Committee of the Communist party**

**MG. February 7, 1924.**

**Tsar And Tsaritsa: The Last Letters.**

**How The Empress Would Have Dealt With The Duma And Its Leaders.**

**The Days Of The Revolution.**

**The Tsar Exhorted: "Be Peter The Great, Ivan The Terrible."**

**"I Hope Kerensky Will Be Hanged."**

**Moscow, February 1.**

**The Russian Central Archives have just published the last series of letters and telegrams exchanged by the Tsar and Tsaritsa during his absences from Tsarskoe Selo in December, 1916, and February and March, 1917. The one absence ended with the murder of Rasputin in the Iusupov Palace in Petrograd, when the Tsar immediately returned from Headquarters; the other ended with the coming of the Revolution, when he returned to Tsarakoe Selo only after his abdication. For this reason these letters are of even greater historical interest than those which have been previously published. They are interesting even from what they do not say. The mere fact that in letters which treat freely of most intimate and secret matters there is not a single word on the subject is almost enough to make an end of the legend, long widely believed, that during that winter the Tsaritsa was urging the advisability of a separate peace between Russia and Germany. On the other hand, letter after letter confirms the belief that Rasputin's influence on the Tsaritsa (and through her on the Tsar) was unlimited, and that in killing that tough, cunning, dissolute Siberian peasant Purishkevitch and his friends were really killing the man who was at that time the political director of the**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Autocracy. As with the preceding letters, these are printed in a Russian translation from the English originals, and the excerpts that follow are consequently translations from a translation.**

**"The Holy Man Of God."**

**When the Tsar left for Headquarters at the beginning of December, 1916, the rumblings of the coming explosion were already to be heard. Questions about Rasputin and his influence were disturbing the whole of society; people who at that time were Liberals and moderate Conservatives were more and more loudly demanding a Ministry responsible to the Duma, Patriots were urging the Tsar not to alienate but to cooperate with the more progressive of his subjects, and all these things were disturbing the "Man of God," and still more so his disciple in the palace, who was growing more and more desperate at the inability of the Tsar to terrify people into silence and submission. Even in her birthday letter to the Tsar she strikes the same note when urging the support of Protopopov, who was, at her insistence and Rasputin's, appointed Minister of the Interior:**

**Support him, be firm, don't give in or we shall have no more peace. In future they will worry you still more, since they see that they can get your agreement by means of persistent obstinacy. Just as obstinately as they – i.e. Tr(epov) (president of the Council of Ministers) and Rodz(ianko) (the President of the Duma) (with all mischief – makers) – on one side, so I, for my part shall stand up against them (together with the Holy Man of God) on the other. Do not support them – support us, who live exclusively for you, Baby, and Russia.... In "Les Amis de Dieu" one of the holy fathers says that a country where a man of God helps the rulers can never perish. That is true – only one must obey (listen?), trust, ask advice – not think that there are things He does not know. God shows Him everything. That is why people who do not understand His soul are so delighted by His astonishing mind – capable of understanding everything. And when he blesses any sort of enterprise it succeeds, and if He recommends people one can be sure that they are good people. If afterwards they change, that is not His fault – but He is less mistaken in people than we....**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**At the moment Rasputin was urging the dismissal of Makarov, the Minister of Justice (presently replaced by Dobrovosky) and the elevation of Protopopov (the Tsar had made him only "acting" Minister). He was thoroughly conscious of the coming storm and regarded the Duma as a personal enemy of his own and as a center of sedition and agitation. There is no need to say that the Tsaritsa agreed with him.**

### **The Empress And The Duma**

**She writes on December 9:**

**In the Duma they are only afraid of one thing – a long suspension: but Trepov means to lie to you and to say that it will be worse if these people go to their homes and spread their news. But our Friend says that no one believes the deputies when each one is alone at home – they are powerful only when they are gathered together. My dear, be firm and trust the advice of our Friend – it is for your own good .... Our Friend says: "The disturbances have, come which were to be in Russia during or after the war, and if our one (you) have not taken the place of Nik.Nik. (the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievitch, Commander –in – Chief until at Rasputin's insistence he was turned out and the Tsar took his place) he would already have lost the throne." ... Only dismiss the Duma quickly and for as long as possible ... believe me – you know, Trepov is flirting with Rodzianko. Everyone knows this, but for political reasons he slyly hides it from you. Go to the beloved icon and get their decision and strength. Continually remember what our Friend saw in a dream. It is very significant for you and all of us.**

**The Tsar writes: "I have changed the day for receiving Trepov , making it tomorrow, Saturday. I intend to be firm, brusque, and unfriendly." Later he reports his interview with Trepov and says he is sure his face was unfriendly and hard because Trepov fidgeted about in his chair.**

**All this was within a few days of Rasputin's murder. On December 14 the Tsaritsa was almost desperate because the Duma was to meet in January and not later, so that the deputies, instead of scampering**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**through Russia, would remain in Petrograd. The session was to end on December 17:**

**My dear, our Friend asked you to close it on the 14th. Anna (Vyrubova) and I wrote to you about it, and now they have the time to do dirty tricks.**

**Siberia For The Politicians.**

**Other things also disturbed her. She had heard that the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievitch was to return from the Caucasus for a military conference:**

**Our front has nothing in common with the Caucasus. Do not let him, the evil genius. He will interfere in affairs and talk about Vasilchikova. Be Peter the Great, Ivan the Terrible, the Emperor Paul – smash them all – don't laugh, naughty. I would passionately like to see you like that with regard to these people who try to direct you when it ought to be the other way about.... God will help, I know, but you must be firm. Dismiss the Duma at once. When you told Trepov the 17th you did not know what they were planning. Quietly and with a clear conscience before all Russia, I would exile Lvov to Siberia (it has been done for much less serious crimes), take away his rank from Samarin (he signed that Moscow document), Miliukov, Gutchkov, and Polivanov – also to Siberia. It is war now, and at such a time an internal war is the utmost treachery. Why you do not look at things like that I truly cannot understand. I am only a woman, but soul and brain tell me that this would be the salvation of Russia. They do much more harm than ever the Sukhomlinovs did. Forbid Brusilov and the rest when they present themselves to mention any political questions whatever. That man is a fool who wants a responsible Ministry as Georgii (Mikhaikovitch, Grand Duke) wrote. Remember, even M. Phillippe (a French spiritualist precursor of Rasputin) said that one must not give a Constitution as it would be Russia's ruin and yours, and all true Russians say the same.... I know I am hurting you –ah, wouldn't I much rather write only letters full of love, tenderness, and affection, of which my heart is so full! But my duty – as**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

wife, mother, and mother of Russia – obliges me to tell you all – with the blessing of our Friend. My dear, the light of my life, if you were to meet the enemy in battle you would never waver but would march ahead like a lion. Be one now in battle against a little handful of scoundrels and republicans! Be the master, and all will bow down before you.

To this letter the Tsar replied gently: "I thank you tenderly for the stern written reprimand. I read it with a smile, because you talk as if with a child." And after telling her that he is thinking of dismissing Trepov as soon as he has closed the Duma and mentioning a few other political questions, signs himself "Your poor little weak – willed hubby' Nicky." He signed several successive letters in the same way.

### **The Assassination.**

Three days later the blow had fallen. The Man of God has been lured to the Iusupov Palace, had eaten a number of pink poisoned cakes apparently without feeling any ill effect, had been shot and supposed dead, had horrified his murderers by rising and beginning to crawl away, and had been finally dispatched, put in a motor – car, and shoved under the ice of the Neva. A letter of the Tsaritsa's dated December 17 was begun before the news reached Tsarskoe Selo. It ends in pencil:

We are all sitting together. You can imagine our feelings and thoughts – our Friend has disappeared. Yesterday A. saw Him and He told her that Felix (Iusupov) had asked him to visit him at night, so that He might see Irina (Princess Iusupova). A motorcar came for him (a military car) with two civilians and He went away. Tonight a great row in the Iusupov house – a big gathering, Dimitry (Grand Duke), Purishkevitch (member of the Dumas), etc. – all drunk. The police heard shots. Purishkevitch ran out shouting to the police that our Friend was killed. Our Friend was in a good mood these days, but nervous and was also troubled on account of Ania, as Batiushin (General, Examiner at several courts martial) is trying to collect evidence against Ania ....I still trust in God's mercy that they have only taken Him away somewhere. Kalinin (Protopopov) is doing all he can. But I beg you send Voeikov (of the Tsar's suite). We women are here alone with our weak heads. I am letting her live here as

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**now they will at once be going for her (Vyrubova). I cannot and will not believe that they have killed Him. May God have mercy upon us.**

**Such desperate anxiety (I am calm – cannot believe it).**

**Thank you for your dear letter. Come at once – no one will dare to touch her or do anything to her when you are here...."**

**On December 18 the Tsaritsa telegraphed that she had, in the Tsar's name, ordered that the Grand Duke Dimitry was to be forbidden to leave his house. "The body not yet found. When will you be here?" The Tsar replied that he had only just received a letter and would return at 5 o'clock on the 19th. A last telegram from the Tsaritsa on the 19th tells them, "Found in the water." The Man of God was dead, and his advice coming now, as it were, from beyond the grave had additional weight. On December 20, the day after the finding of Rasputin's body, was confirmed, as Rasputin had wished, the appointment of Protopopov as Minister of the Interior. That ends a period. There are no more letters until the Tsar left Tsarskoe Selo for Headquarters towards the end of February, 1917, only a few days before his reign came to an end.**

### **A Shrine for Rasputin.**

**It is difficult for normally constituted people to realize what the removal of Rasputin meant to the Tsaritsa. Merely human counselors might die unregretted. The death of Witte was a relief. The murder of Stolypin did nothing to lessen the resentment felt against him at Court. But the murder of Rasputin deprived Tsarskoe Selo of advice that came direct from Heaven. Moreover, it was a sacrilegious act, punishment for which might well be visited on the whole country. The Tsaritsa did her best to atone for it. The body of Rasputin was brought to Tsarskoe Selo and temporarily buried there at the edge of the garden, until a chapel could be built to enshrine the sacred relics. Architects were called in, a design chosen, and in spite of the unfavorable weather and season the building was begun at once, while the grave became a place of daily pilgrimage. It is possible that only the Revolution prevented Rasputin's ultimate**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**canonization. Meanwhile the murder stimulated rather than allayed the Tsaritsa's policy of universal repression.**

**The Tsar telegraphed on arrival at Headquarters towards the end of February, a kindly, intimate message. It was cold, bright, and windy. His cough was a little better. He felt "firm, but very lonely." The next day two of the children began with measles and he wrote affectionately suggesting that this would be a legitimate excuse for her to receive fewer people, and only at the end mentions the refrain of all his wife's letters: – "You write about being firm, masterful; that is quite right. Be assured, I do not forget, but generally there is no need to snap at people right and left. A quiet abrupt remark or reply is very often quite enough to show this or that man his place." The next day he telegraphed to her not to overtire herself running from one bedside to another. On that day her letter begins with the news that the people have stormed food shops on the Vassily Island and on the Nevsky Prospect and that the Cossacks have been called out against them. She gives him news of the invalids and then says, "I hope that Kedrinsky (a mistake for Kerensky) of the Duma will be hanged for his terrible speech – that is necessary (martial law, time of war), and that will be an example. All are longing and praying for you to show firmness."**

### **The Beginning Of The End.**

**On February 25 the Tsaritsa begins her letter with even more disturbing news: –**

**The strikes and disorders in the town are more than provoking. (I send you Kalinin's letter to me. It is true it is not worth much, as you have probably had a more detailed report from the Chief of Police.) This is a hooligan movement, boys and girls running about and shouting that they have no bread – simply to make a disturbance – and workmen who prevent others from working. If the weather was very cold they would all probably be sitting at home. But all this will pass and settle down if only the Duma will behave well. They are not printing the worst speeches, but I think that for anti-dynastic speeches it is necessary to punish**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**immediately and very severely, the more so that this is time of war. I had a feeling when you left that things would go badly.**

**The next day things were worst, 200,000 people taking part in disorders in Petrograd, an officer of the gendarmes killed:-**

**All the trouble from that gaping public, of well – dressed people, wounded soldiers, etc., student girls, and so on, who instigate the others. Lili talked with sledge-drivers to know the news. They told her that students had come to them and declared that if they went out in the morning they would be shot. What debased types! Of course the sledge-drivers and carters are on strike. But they say it is not like 1905 because all adore you and only want bread.**

**On February 26 the news from Petrograd had begun to disturb the Tsar:  
–**

**I hope Khabalov (General commanding in Petrograd) will be able quickly to put an end to these disorders in the streets. Protopopov ought to give him clear, definite instructions. If only old Golitsyn does not lose his head.**

**On February 27 he writes: –**

**After yesterday's news from town I saw a good many frightened faces here. Fortunately Alexeievis is calm, but thinks it necessary that a very energetic man should be appointed to force the Ministers to work for the solution of the food, railway, coal question, etc. That, of course, is quite right.**

**He telegraphs: –**

**Leave tomorrow 2:30. The cavalry Guards have received orders immediately to go to town from Novgorod. God grant the disorders in the troops will soon be stopped.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**Already his ukase dismissing the Duma had been met by the resolution of the Duma to remain in session. A Soviet of workers' delegates was sitting in the Tauris Palace. Petrograd was in the hands of the revolting troops. Protopopov, on whom were centered all the hopes of Tsarskoe Selo, was hiding for the night, unable to get to his own house. In the morning he went to his tailors, where he hid all day, and in the evening gave himself up and became a prisoner in the Tauris Palace. I think that it was this night or the night before that some of the Ministers, besieged in the Admiralty, were desperately typing proclamations to the effect that no one was to be allowed in the streets after 6 o'clock.**

**On February 28 the Tsar telegraphed on his way to Tsarskoe:-**

**Left this morning at five. Constantly with you in thought. Lovely weather. I hope you feel well and calm. Many troops sent from the front. A hearty greeting.**

**Six hours later he telegraphed from another station that he hoped to be home on the morrow. His train was stopped and turned back. The next telegram is from Pakov on March 2: -**

**Arrived here in time for dinner. Hope health of all better, and that we shall soon see each other. God be with you...**

**"Caught Like A Mouse In A Trap."**

**March 2 is the date of two letters which show how much the Tsaritsa had of the temperament she wished for her husband:-**

**My dear priceless angel - light of my life. - My heart burst with the thought that you in complete loneliness are living through these torments and turmoils, and we know nothing of you and you know nothing of us. I am now sending to you Soloviev and Gramotin; I am giving them a letter each, and I hope that at least one will reach you. I wanted to send an airplane, but everybody has disappeared. The young men will tell you about everything, so there is no need for me to tell you of the state of affairs. Everything is abominable, and events develop with**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**colossal speed. But I firmly believe – and nothing will shake that belief – all will be well. Especially since I had your telegram this morning – the first ray of sunlight in this morass. Not knowing where you were, I tried at last through Headquarters, for Rodz pretended that he did not know why they stopped you. It's clear that they do not want to let you see me until you sign some sort of paper, a Constitution or some other horror of that kind. And you alone, without an army behind you, caught like a mouse in a trap, what can you do? This is the greatest baseness and vileness, something unheard of in history – stopping one's Emperor. Now P cannot get to you because Luga .has been taken by the revolutionaries. They stopped, captured, and disarmed the – regiment and spoilt the line. Perhaps you will show yourself to the troops in Pskov and other places and gather them about you? If they force you to concessions, then you in no case whatever are bound to fulfill them, because they were obtained in an unworthy manner. Paul, after getting a most terrible scolding from me because he did nothing with the Guards, is now trying to work as hard as he can, and is preparing to save us all in a noble and senseless manner; he has composed an idiotic manifesto about a Constitution after the war, and so on.**

**Your little family is worthy of its father. I have gradually told the older ones and to the Cow (Vyrubova) about the situation – before they were too ill – terribly severe measles, such terrible coughing. It was very painful pretending before them. Baby I told only half.... I can telephone only to the Winter Palace.... Last night from 1:00 to 2 30 I saw Ivanov (General), who is now sitting here in his train. I thought he might get to you through Drio (railway junction) can he get through? He hoped to bring your train through behind his own... There are two tendencies – the Duma and the revolutionaries, – two snakes, which, as I hope, will gnaw each other's heads off – that would save the situation. Such a bright sun today, if only you were here.... But when the troops know that you were not allowed through they will be furious and rise against them all. They think the Duma wants to be with you and for you. Well, let them restore order and show that they are worth something, but they have lit too big a blaze, and how to put it out now?.... God will help, will help, and your glory will return. This is the height of ill-luck! What horror for the Allies and joy for the enemy! I can give you no advice, only, my dear, be**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**yourself. If you have to submit to circumstances, then God will help you get free from them....**

**In a postscript she begs him to wear Rasputin's cross. "Wear His cross, even if it is not convenient for the sake of my peace of mind." She wanted to send him a small sacred picture, but refrained, because the letter could not be folded small enough with it. Actually it was folded into a space not more than an inch square, to lessen the chance of its being discovered on the way. The second letter covers the same ground as the first, and like it insists that no concessions that the Tsar may make will be binding on him afterwards when power is again in his hands:**

**Gramotn and Soloviev are going with two letters. I hope that one of them at least will reach you. Most maddening that we are not together – although in soul and heart more so than ever – nothing can separate us, although that is just what they want, and therefore do not want to let you see me until you have signed their papers about a responsible Ministry or a Constitution. It is frightful to think that as you have no army behind you you perhaps will have to do it. But such a promise will have no sort of force when power is again in your hands. They have caught you meanly, like a mouse in a trap – a thing unheard of in history. The basis of it, the humiliation is killing me.**

### **The Abdication.**

**On March 3 she wrote a letter to send by the wife of an officer, though she feared that she might be searched by the way, "so far have they all lost their senses." It ends:**

**She (the Tsaritsa) is not interfering in anything, has seen none of "them," and never asked it, so don't believe it if they tell you. Now she is only a mother with her sick children. Can do nothing for fear of doing harm, as she has no news from her dear one. Such sunny weather, not a cloud – that means trust and hope. All round is black as night, but God is over all. We do not know His ways, nor how He will help, but He will hear all prayers. I know nothing of the war, and live cut off from the world. Continually fresh news that drives one out of one's mind – the latest the**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**father (the Tsar) has refused to hold the place he has held for 23 years. One might go mad, but we don't; she will still believe in a bright future here on earth, remember that. Paul has just been – told me everything. I perfectly understand your action O my hero! I know that you could not sign anything opposed to what you swore at your coronation. We perfectly understand each other, we need no words, and I swear on my life we shall see you again on your throne, carried back by your people and troops to the glory of your realm. You have saved the realm of your son, and the country and your own sacred honor, and –Judes Ruszky (General Ruszky, who is said to have advised the abdication) – you will be crowned by God Himself on this earth in your country....**

**The lady put off her journey till the next day, and the Tsaritsa wrote an additional letter. The Tsar had been able to send a telegram and also to talk with the Tsaritsa on the telephone. She writes: –**

**Baby has crawled across the bed and asked me to give you a kiss. Maria and I are writing, almost impossible to see, as the blinds are drawn down. Only this morning I have read the manifesto (his abdication in favor of the Grand Duke Michael), and then the other Michael's. People are beside themselves with despair – they adore my angel. A movement in the troops is beginning. Do not fear for Sunny, she does not stir, does not exist. But before us I feel and foresee bright sunshine.... They are arresting people right and left – of course, officers. God knows what is happening – here the rifleman are electing their own commanders and behave abominably with them, don't salute, and spoke right in the faces of their officers. I don't want to write all that is happening – it is so disgusting.... The sick ones upstairs and downstairs know nothing of your decision – I am afraid to tell them, and just now it is not necessary. Lili has been a guardian angel and helps me to keep firm; we have not once lost our presence of mind. My beloved, dear angel, I am afraid to think of what you have to bear, it is driving me out of my mind! O God! Of course He will reward you hundredfold for all your sufferings. No need to write more of this, impossible. How they humiliated you, sending those two beasts ( Shulgin and Gutchkov, members of the Duma who were sent from the Duma to the Tsar to invite his abdication). I did not know who they were until you told me yourself. I feel that the army will rise....**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**She repeats the rumor that ran through Petrograd, "Revolution in Germany, W(ilhelm) killed, his son wounded," gives the news of the invalids, and ends with a postscript: – "Only this morning we learned that all was handed over to M (ichael) and that Baby was now safe – what a relief!"**

**That is the last of the letters. There remain four short telegrams from the Tsar, announcing the arrival of his mother the Dowager Empress, sending affectionate messages to his family, asking for news of the family of old Baron Fredericks, and suggesting, if anything, rather relief than despair. The last telegram is dated March 7. On the next day the Tsar and the Tsaritsa were formally placed under arrest.**

**The church that was being built to hold Rasputin's body was never finished. His body was torn up from the grave under the tree. A few days later the wooden walls of the unfinished church were scrawled with ribald drawings and words. Soldiers were dancing in it to the noise of an accordion and taking turns to go down into the vault that was to have been a sepulcher.**

**MG March 13, 1924.**

**"Hullo, Great Britain!"**

**It is not wireless I dislike and fear so much as "listening in." It is when it is used not as a speaking tube but as a megaphone that wireless becomes, as I think, a possible danger to humanity. It is the latest most subtle move in the general megaphonisation of human speech and the gradual establishment of control it by megaphone over human thought. "Hullo, Great Britain!" says the young man with the trained voice at the broadcasting station. No newspaper has ever aspired to such a style. Newspapers address their "readers." Even that marks a step in a wrong direction. Newspapers show by it that they know that people cannot help**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

reading them. It is not so long since writers addressed their “intelligent readers,” or their “dear readers,” showing that they valued them and knew they were lucky to have readers at all. The reader is being slowly forced down from the independence of the guerrilla into being mere cannon fodder.

During the last 20 years we have seen how much can be done by newspapers alone in regimenting a country’s brains. This new instrument will be infinitely more effective. The jostle of rivals, who at least to some extent counteract each other is replaced by a monopoly. We are told that this monopoly will not be used for propaganda. That is impossible. It cannot but propagate the taste, the attitude of mind of the choosers of the program. Even if the propaganda is unconscious it will not for that be the less successful. And in a time of stress does anyone for a moment imagine that anyone will not capture it who can? Propaganda is not necessarily a blunt, noisy tool that anyone can detect the moment it is brought into use.

You may say that there are not enough listeners-in to matter. But the thing is spreading. Already serials in every street betray the subjects of that honey – tongued young man. Soon he may be speaking nightly to the whole population. We shall take to it as we took to uncomfortable, dusty trains when there was nothing to prevent us from walking or staying at home. The invention of the loudspeaker means that that not even in public places shall we be exempt. It will soon be impossible to sit down to dinner in a restaurant without hearing that cheerful confident address, followed by music that we have not chosen, news that we do not want to hear, and all the rest of the program that someone somewhere has decided upon as good that night for “Great Britain.” The dictator will have us all as privates in his regiment. We shall think in time to his conducting. The newspapers have appropriated much of us but this invention will prevent us from calling even the tattered remnants of our souls our own.

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**The essence of the thing is its one – sidedness. You cannot answer back. The band may play out of tune. You hiss in private impotence. He may be doing his best, but there is no need to ask you not to shoot at the pianist. You would only damage your own furniture. The case is worst with speeches. The speaker may use arguments the hollowness of which could be exposed by a single word. You cannot say that word. At a meeting you can heckle a speaker, or, if you have not (as I have not) courage for that, you can smile in such a way that those about you ask themselves whether there is not, indeed, something to smile at, and in this way by rousing their critical faculties you may produce a little cool eddy in the most enthusiastic meeting, and that eddy may spread until it's refrigerating influence reaches the very platform and leaves the speaker dumb and shivering with the sweat of vein exertion dry upon his forehead. Listening-in, you can do none of these things. Even if you uncage your ears and throw the brain –bridle on the shelf it brings you no satisfaction. You have left the meeting, but no one saw you go. Invisible you listened and as a shade you waited. Your departure was no public protest, and the talker proceeds unaware of the secession of a single unit of "Great Britain."**

**And here I have a suggestion to make, which may yet, I think, save Great Britain for democracy. Much money has been earned by the inventors of the ingenious modifications of the apparatus. No one, however, has as yet produced the thing that would, while perfecting it, do away with most of the objections to which it is manifestly open. This is a simple means of transmitting criticism from the listener in to the performer. There is no need to arrange for the transmission of applause. These people are altogether too confident of universal gratitude. The thing need not be elaborate, but it must eliminate the inconvenience that would result if all critics were to speak at once, as they would naturally speak, since all must suffer at the same moment. I suggest a button to be pressed which should release a small electric current acting through a minute receiving apparatus attached, according to law, to a tender part of the performer and inflicting a small, and infinitesimal electric shock. If,**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

when listening-in, I should be moved to criticism I should press that button. It would relieve my feeling, but if I were in a minority of one the shock would be scarcely perceptible. If only a few of the listeners were to press the buttons the performer would feel a slight tickling stimulus, which would put him on his mettle, like the knowledge that a few dissidents are gathered somewhere in the audience. If more, then perhaps the listeners would hear the voice of the performer quiver, break – even a slight squeak would be a proof that he was feeling the cumulative shocks of many sparks of criticism. And the current might be scientifically adjusted so that in the event of all the listeners, all “Great Britain,” pressing their buttons and keeping them pressed in a unanimous passion of disgust the total current released would produce such a shock as to ensure that in this world at least that performer would not be heard again. The mere knowledge that they faced the risk of final sparking off the stage would, I suggest, make inferior performers hesitate, and the knowledge that he could contribute even a microscopic spark to such an ultimate criticism would relieve the humiliating passivity of the listener-in. I do not intend to claim my share of any royalty from the men who supplies the practical details of my invention.

[Closing sentence is unreadable.]

**MG. May 15, 1924.**

**Sudden Spring**

**Reval, May 5.**

**Spring in the Eastern Baltic is an explosion. There are no spring months. The event is instantaneous. The white armor – plating of the winter is rent as if by dynamite; spring has arrived, and the next day or the day after will be summer. Everything that elsewhere is spread over a long,**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**expectant period of “firsts” – the first primrose, the first violet, the first buds on the trees, the first cuckoo – is here crowded together, competitive, and so sudden as to take one’s breath away.**

**A week ago the bay was a sheet of thick ice, with icebreakers forcing a passage through it for the steamships, which, coming from England, had moved backward in time, from spring to winter. The country was deep in snow, and peasants coming to market came in sledges.**

**Then a day of hard southerly wind drove the ice out. The day of hard northerly wind drove it back again, shattered and grinding. People climbed the Castle Rock to look beyond the icefield to the sea, and stood there looking wistfully for spring, stamping their feet on the hard snow that was piled up to the level of the wall. Then the wind blew hard again, and this time from the East with hot sun. The ice was somehow gone. You could see with the glasses little white islands of it glittering in the sun and sailing westwards in the open sea. That was the signal. The train was laid, the match applied and the explosion began. The first fisherman’s boat appeared on the blue waters of a summer bay surrounded by shores and forests deep in snow. The pied fly catcher’s from Africa came back in time to chase the first gnats swarming about the upper branches of the green pines. A great flock of storks going north passed high overhead. The chestnut buds were suddenly sticky. Here and there in patches where the sun lay for long a tired, drab earth showed through the snow, which was still knee – deep in the forests. The wind, from the north now, was cold, but the sun very hot, and each daily battle between the two left the sun more decisively the stronger.**

**The little river overflowed its banks and then ran itself clear. Men and boys with long poles with sharp prongs at the ends of them walked up and down the banks watching for the swift, dim shadows of the pike coming up to spawn. Some walked down the river from its source, others walked a bit from the seashore, where ice and snow still clung in hollows of the sand hills. They met half-way and compared their spoils. A 16-**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**pound pike was brought in with 5 pounds of roe, golden pike caviar, which the lady of the house set before us in a glass dish with chopped onion, an annual delicacy, the proof that spring was here. The door into the veranda, a double door, closed and padded, with even the crevices papered over to keep out the winter, was flung wide open and kept so all day – a triumphant gesture.**

**We make bonfires in dry patches on the outskirts of the forest and put them out again with snow. Wherever the snow has gone the ground is hot to the touch, and the pine cones and fallen twigs are dry as tender. Old ladies pick their way about the garden gathering the pine cones to help their firewood to last out, for it is still cold at night. The frogs begin to croak, and wherever we walk we meet them hurrying to the water, struggling to it over the snow, and with loud splashes breaking through the thin ice that covers the forest pools. The ducks over-eat themselves in the river and the pond, refuse the food that is offered to them at home and stay out late at night gorging themselves with frogs. With a shout someone finds the first patch of new green underfoot. Brimstone and tortoiseshell butterflies flutter by examining everything as if to see that it is still in place. I heard the cuckoo call while I was standing knee-deep in the wet snow under the trees. A bee flew into the house to look at the primula on the writing table. In the morning there are competitive choirs of the birds; in the heat of the afternoon the birds seem to let the buzzing flies have it all their own way. On the seashore the tracks of the birds are clearer in the dry powdery sand than in the melting snow beside it. In the town there are two kinds of people; the pessimists who wear their winter clothes but take care to walk in the shadow of the houses, and the optimists who come out in summer clothes but hurry round cold windy corners and move nimbly from one patch of sunlight to another. On one side of the street are fur coats and hats, and on the other bright jumpers and blouses.**

**Then the wind swings to the south-west, the sun gleams through wet clouds and disappears and the spring cleaning of the earth begins. The**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

rain pours down as if we were a ship and our decks were being sluiced with buckets. The most obstinate of the forest snowdrifts cannot withstand this deluge of tepid water. The forest trees stand in lakes. The streams rise again and roar in chorus. In the towns at night, when the carts are not rattling on the cobbles, a man standing and listening might think he were at Coniston listening to the becks in spate. The water pours off the roofs, is too much for the rain-pipes, overflows the gutters, and tumultuously sweeps the whole of the winters dirt away into the sea. In the morning the houses lift wet, shining roofs to the sun, like children putting up their faces to be dried. The bare trees a day or two ago were no protection to the nesting birds; now after the rain they put on a veil of another color, then are filled with green luminous smoke, and the day after that the birds are laughing at your curiosity, hidden in their green tents. The sunshine, searching the green earth, can find no trace of spring or winter left.

**MG. June 7, 1924.**

**Russia & Bessarabia.**

**A Sensational Report Repudiated.**

**Moscow, Friday.**

Trotsky is here for the party Congress, and for a considerable time has not left Moscow. He has made no such speech as reported in a Berne telegram, either at Podolsk or elsewhere. Further, the statement attributed to him is in complete contradiction to the Russian policy.

The report of the alleged speech at Podolsk (telegraphed from Berne by Reuter) was said to have been received in Rumanian quarters in Berne from Warsaw. Trotsky was made to say, among other things:

“The question of Constantinople and the Straits was one of those rare questions on which the Czarist regime was not deceived. We need the

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Straits and we need Constantinople. Bessarabia is vital to us because Bessarabia is the first step towards Constantinople, and if the Rumanians and their unfortunate instruments the Poles try to bar the way we shall fight them. We are convinced that the Straits will belong to us sooner or later, even if France and Great Britain, forgetting the promises they made during the war, try to prevent us from getting them."**

**MG. June 16, 1924.**

**The Economic Recovery In Russia.  
Big Orders For England If Credit is Granted.**

**Moscow, Sunday.**

**I had an exclusive interview this morning with Mr. Krassin, with whom I discussed a paragraph in this morning's papers quoting from Mr. Hodgson's report as printed in the "Morning Post." Mr. Krassin was unwilling to express any opinion on the measures taken against "economic espionage" on the ground that they are outside his competency, but referring to the statement that economic espionage is not a crime in other countries, but a serious crime in Russia, he said**

**"Other countries are in a different position. There is no other country which has abroad pretenders and claimants to its property, and claimants whose demands have actually been pressed by war and blockade. Besides that, you must not forget that there are countries with which as yet we have no normal relations."**

**I've reminded Mr. Krassin that in 1919 he said to me that even if Russia obtained no help from abroad she would yet succeed in economic recovery, "even if she has to crawl out on all fours," and asked if he was still of the same opinion, he replied:**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**“Much more certain of it. Then I had only theoretical grounds for the belief, but now the theories have been tested and in some degree proved correct. You remember the state of affairs in 1919. Already our agriculture has attained 75% of the pre-war production, industry 40%, and some branches are 100% – like the Grozny oil – or 60%, like the Baku oil. In the Donetz we are producing more coal than we can use. In every branch I can point to actual progress.**

**But now, as in 1919, I believe that by means of foreign help, by a long-term loan and the development of concessions, it would be possible immensely to accelerate the process of recovery which has visibly begun. The process, which may take a quarter of a century, might, with foreign help, be accomplished in less than 10 years. Even if left to our own resources. I have no doubt about the ultimate result, assuming only that we are not hampered by wars, blockades, and etc., and that foreign trade continues so that we can get spare parts for our machinery, raw cotton for our factories, etc. And I see no reason to fear that these possibilities will be taken from us.”**

### **The London Conference.**

**With regard to the London negotiations, Mr. Krassin said: “It is difficult for me to realize the actual position of the British Government, and generally I am not very optimistic. The question of private property is difficult for both sides; the old owners are unwilling to accept compensation in the form we could agree to, and our Government is not inclined to take rash steps. Negotiations are proceeding with individual large owners, but the question remains, to what extent would agreement with two or three large owners affect a general agreement? After Mr. Rakovsky’s visit to Moscow we believed that a loan was probable, but now the British Government not only refuses to participate, but emphasizes that it is entirely aloof and indifferent. The position accordingly is the same as at Genoa.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**“This is disappointing, as we gave Mr. Rakovsky a detailed conspectus of purchases we wished to make immediately, amounting to about £8,000,000. For example, we were prepared to order 47 timber ships, each of 3000 tons; six grain ships of 8000 tons; six oil ships, each of 10,000 tons; and 16 trawlers – well over 200,000 tons of shipping alone, besides grain elevators, harbor cranes, etc. These orders were contingent on our getting reasonable credit terms. If we obtain a loan over a long period we could increase these orders tenfold. We have learnt much since Genoa, and know much better and in more detail what we need.”**

**Mr. Krassin referred to the Urquhart Concession, and said: “I still think that at the time the Urquhart agreement should have been ratified, but conditions are no longer the same, and if I myself had the making of a new agreement I could not make it on the same terms; and if in the present negotiations Mr. Urquhart still insists on the Berlin terms, then, in my opinion, the agreement is impossible.”**

**Turning then to internal affairs, he pointed out that money reform, the complete stabilization of currency, besides releasing people from the constant burden of mathematical calculations, would have a most favorable effect on trade generally. It was no longer necessary for tradesmen to increase their prices by enormous percentages in order to insure themselves against falling currency.**

**I said I found the prices here were very high compared with those in England. He said that it was an unfair comparison, and that before the war on going to England from Russia he always felt that things in England were given away for nothing, besides being of better quality than were obtainable in Russia. English boots, for example, before the war were a third of the price and infinitely better than Russian boots. He said there was now a steady tendency in manufactured goods to decrease in price and in agricultural produce to rise towards the normal level.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **Check on Profiteering.**

**I asked him to explain the purpose of the new Commissariat of Internal Trade, the creation of which he has been urging for some time. Mr. Krassin replied: –**

**“With us the biggest branches of industry are nationalized, so that the State itself owns sugar, textiles, metal, and etc. We produce, but who is to sell? If the private trader, then there is always the dangers that he, buying from us cheaply, will sell at high prices, and what interest has our workers’ Government enriching traders and allowing them to get into their hands first the economic and then the political power? It is much better to organize our own trade through Government organizations and cooperation. We are not prohibiting private trade, because that would lead to shortage. Accordingly we aim at regulating trade by purely economic means.**

**After money reform we have made low prices our aim, and have organized State intervention in big centers where there was danger of prices rising. When traders have tried to put up prices we have brought them down by putting on the market large quantities of our own goods. The special task of the new Commissariat is to supervise the internal market and regulate prices, not by decree or administrative influence, but by maneuvering State goods precisely as is done for selfish purposes by large trusts abroad. The problem is important and connected with currency and wages, because raised prices mean the need of raising wages, and so on in a vicious circle. There is nothing new in the actual process of economic regulation in this way, but whereas abroad you depend on the haphazard working of forces you do not control, we wish to use these forces economically and with a definite plan. The difference between foreign trade monopoly and internal trade supervision is that whereas foreign trade is administratively controlled, internal trade is controlled economically. We have no thought of abolishing the new**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**economic policy, which permits anyone to trade within the country who wishes. Personally, I make a distinction between what is known as N.E.P. and the new economic policy. That policy is an actual piece of Leninism, and is the only means of introducing Socialism in a country of small producers. N. E. P. is a recrudescence of capitalism. We are against N.E.P. and for the new economic policy. “**

**MG. June 26, 1924.**

**Russian Harvest Reports**

**No Danger Of Famine.**

**Improvement On Finance And Transport.**

**Moscow, Wednesday.**

**All forecasts of Russian foreign trade and internal progress are dependent on the character of the harvest, and the first part of this summer has been extremely dry, so that at one time there was fear of general drought. Recent rains in many parts of Russia have dispelled this fear, though it is clear that certain districts have suffered severely.**

**In some districts, notably Saratov, the grass has been burnt up, and the peasants remembering the famine of 1921, have been selling off cattle at ridiculous prices, while private traders have been simultaneously running up the price of bread. State traders are under orders to sell bread at the old price, and as there are ample stores the danger of famine prices has been averted, but it seems certain that some of the Volga districts will need State assistance and be unable to contribute corn for export.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **Half – Pound Hailstones.**

**The Ukraine harvest will not be above the average, but the area sown has this year increased by 1 million dessiatins (over 2 ½ million acres). It is reported from Kharkhoff that drought affects principally the rye crops, and that the wheat harvest “in any case will not be less than last year.” Recent rains may improve the position, though they were not everywhere of a very satisfactory character, but were accompanied by hurricanes (in one place a whole goods train was blown off the line) and hail (in the Vologda government there were hailstones up to a half pound weight).**

**In Central Russia, for example, reports from Jaroslav suggest an average harvest, and latterly Siberian reports have been more hopeful. In White Russia bread prices are falling in connection with the improved appearance of the crops. In some parts of Transcaucasia there is enough to feed the population for only four months. The Armenian harvest is above the average.**

**A leading article in “Izvestia,” speaking of reports from abroad about general famine and failure of Russian export, says there is no ground for panic, and that there is now a very great difference between last year’s harvest and this. It points out that the whole situation is quite unlike that of 1921. Transport is improved, the financial position is stronger, and if the worst comes to the worst the Government, by limiting corn export, will easily be able to satisfy the needs of any districts that may be hardly hit.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. June 27, 1924.**

**Congress Of Moscow International.  
Revolution Expected In Germany.  
Hope In Great Britain.**

**Moscow, Thursday.**

**Independent correspondents have not hitherto been admitted to the Congress of the Third International, so that it is possible only to form a secondhand judgment from press reports which are controlled by the strictly orthodox. These give no idea of the remarkable ovation given to Trotsky and the special enthusiasm shown for those of the German delegates who replace the men who were responsible in Moscow's opinion for withholding the match from the mass of explosive material in Germany last October.**

**The disappointment at the non—arrival of a German revolution last autumn found a scapegoat in Radek, who was not only excluded from the Presidium of the Congress, but was actually not included in the long list of Russian delegates, and had to obtain special permission to speak on his own exclusive behalf. From being a leading figure at previous congresses he has become a bone of contention in this, and while hotly defended by some of the Germans is accused by others of spoiling the German party, and in general, is very roughly handled by Zinovieff and the majority of the Congress, who associated Radek alleged error of judgment in Germany with his oppositional position during the party discussion here.**

**The English movement.**

**The bitterness over the failure last autumn, when they believe a Communist revolution in Germany was possible, is only softened by the belief that the opportunity will occur again as a result, direct or indirect,**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**of reparations and the Experts Report. This is the leitmotiv of the Congress, although much more attention than ever before is paid to the English movement, and there is general agreement among Continental revolutionaries that “the center of gravity of the revolutionary struggle is now in the British Empire.” British delegates for the most part limit themselves to an analysis of the position of the Labour Government, an expression of belief that Labour is shifting to the Left while the Government is tending more and more to seek support from the lower middle classes, and discussion of Communist tactics with regard to a Labour Government.**

**The Hindu, Roy, declares that revolution in England is impossible without revolution throughout the British Empire, and urges British Communists to come out with a definite anti-colonial policy. A Dutchman points to the Dutch Communist demand for the abandonment of the Dutch Indies as a model for the English party.**

### **Forthcoming Anti— War Demonstration.**

**The most interesting practical decision reached is a demonstration against war, to be arranged in all the great capitals on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the declaration in August, this demonstration to be particularly directed against the Social Democrats, who are held responsible for the failure to prevent the last war, and are alleged to be taking active part in preparations for the next.**

**The Congress is likely to last some time, and various excursions for delegates have been arranged. Some went for a trip with the vessels of the Russian Baltic Fleet. They got as far as the Revalastein Lightship, when they met fog. The correspondent of the “Izvestia” gives a lively account of fog horns, bells, and projectors that were unable to pierce the mist. “However, the squadron conquered the difficulties with honor, turned round, and set a course for Kronstadt.”**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG.. August 1, 1924.**

**Concerning Lenin And Trotsky.**

**Trotsky's New Book.**

**The Bolsheviks In London.**

**[The following article deals with the early period of Lenin's activities in exile: subsequent articles will deal with Trotsky's reminiscences of the first years of the Bolshevik Revolution.]**

**Until shortly before Lenin's death Trotsky and Lenin were placed in the popular imagination side-by-side as the two great leaders of the revolution. This was so not only abroad but also among the rank-and-file of the Bolshevik party, though it was not so among the small group near the head of affairs, who were as tireless in criticizing Trotsky as they were in praising Lenin. And now Lenin is dead and his mantle has not fallen upon Trotsky, but upon that small group which took the opportunity of the party discussion that ended with Lenin's death to make a determined attempt to destroy Trotsky's political prestige. Trotsky was ill at the time, and an attack of the character then made upon him cannot be met by brilliant pamphleteering alone, although Trotsky on a sickbed and unable to speak was not to be parted from his pen. At the crisis of that discussion the pamphlets of his rivals were obtainable everywhere, and for some reason his own, issued simultaneously with theirs, was not to be found in the shops until much later. He has now returned from convalescence in the South and, as usual with him on recovery after a period of illness, has published a book.**

**This book is called "Concerning Lenin," but though it is full of valuable notes about his friend it might more accurately be called "Concerning Lenin and Trotsky," for it is a reminder of the part that Trotsky played side-by-side with Lenin in the revolution, a reminder that, for example, it was he and not Stalin or Zinoviev who shared Lenin's bed on the floor of**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**a bare room in the Smolny Institute on the day of the overthrow of the Provisional Government.**

### **Trotsky's Purpose.**

**Indirectly, too, it is a political tract, justifying Trotsky's own position in the recent discussion by showing that the oppressive uniformity of opinion in the party now demanded by Zinoviev and Stalin is a new thing; and quite unlike the lively play of opinion which the party allowed at the most critical periods of the revolution.**

**Trotsky reminds us that during the actual revolution Lenin himself only became reconciled on the very last day with the methods that under Trotsky's leadership have been adopted by the Revolutionary Committee. He reminds us that there were similar divisions of opinion over the Constituent Assembly, a struggle over the question of coalition with the other Socialist parties, and a pitched battle within the party over the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. Though the book contains no references to the attack made on him by Stalin and others, it is actually a counter attack, and one particularly difficult for his opponents to parry, the more so that Trotsky since his return has behaved with absolute "correctness," emphasizing his loyalty to the party and refusing to make any obvious profit out of the outbursts of enthusiasm on his appearance at meetings, which show that the attempt to reduce him in the ranks has signally failed. By this very preservation of dignity he has deepened very markedly the general sense among all those who have personal reasons to resent his independent, flighty, and rather dictatorial manner in committee that the most brilliant of their living leaders has been very shabbily treated**

### **Trotsky Knocks at Lenin's Door.**

**Trotsky's book is avoidably not a biography but a collection of biographical material, to which in later editions he proposes to add. It**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**begins with an account of that little colony of Russian Social Democrats settled in London, working in the British Museum and making Saturday night speeches in Whitechapel, to whom Trotsky came in the autumn of 1902 after his escape from Siberia. He went straight to Lenin's lodgings, having been told on his way across Europe how many knocks he had to make on the door. It was inhumanely early in the morning, but Trotsky was still glowing from his escape and had crossed Europe in a youthful ecstasy. It never occurred to him to wait at the station. He was full of the reports he had to make, particularly on the poor opinion he had formed of the revolutionary organizations on the Russian frontiers. He had crossed the frontier with smugglers, and it is amusing to read that they had fleeced him unmercifully, exactly as, 20 years later, they were to turn dishonest pennies in fleecing escaping counter – revolutionaries.**

**Mrs. Lenin let him in and made tea for him in the kitchen while Lenin, without enthusiasm, got up and dressed. Mrs. Lenin was then "at the center of all the work of organization."**

**"In her room was almost always the smell of burnt paper, and she often complained with her gentle emphasis that people wrote little, or mixed up the ciphers, or wrote in chemical inks in such a way that one line crawled over another, and so on."**

**Lenin: "There Westminster."**

**Later in the day Lenin took him for a walk through London and showed him some of the sites. "That is their famous Westminster," he said. "Their," Trotsky points out did not mean "belonging to the English," but "belonging to the enemy." The enemy, of course, was "the exploiting class." From so early up to the very end, Lenin preserved this way of looking at all artistic or technical achievements. Everything was either "ours" or "theirs." If an achievement was "theirs," it did not mean that he did not admire it. He would look at it with the frankest admiration, but always with the admiration that a general may feel for the technique**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**of his enemy. Never did a man more single-mindedly shape himself for a particular end. Even this walk with the youthful Trotsky was devoted to an examination of the promising recruit, “one of ours.”**

**‘I told him how in the Moscow prison for persons under sentence of transportation we had collectively studied his “Development of Capitalism in Russia” and how in exile we had worked at Marx’s “Capital” but had stuck at the second volume.’**

**That night Trotsky took up his quarters in a house where lived Vera Zasulich, Martov, and the manager of their printing press. (They printed their revolutionary paper in London and smuggled it into Russia).**

**“The Dough of which Robespierres are Made.”**

**The political émigrés lived in an atmosphere of serious internecine struggle, and in this struggle Lenin exercised himself and welded and sharpened his weapons for the revolution which all expected, but he more definitely than any. Lenin, Trotsky points out, was already 30 when he first came abroad. Axelrod, one of the older revolutionaries, had written a preface to a manuscript of Lenin, thereby adopting him, but at the same time emphasizing that he was “a pupil.” Almost immediately on his arrival Lenin astonished and shocked the “elders” by being not only unwilling to remain a pupil, but even ready to enter the lists with his would-be teachers.**

**“The old ones had by this time spent 20 years in exile. For them “Iskra” and “Zarya” (“The Spark” and “The Dawn,” revolutionary papers) were mainly a literary enterprise. For Lenin, on the other hand, they were the direct instruments of revolutionary action.”**

**This is equally true of the whole 24 volumes of his published works. Lenin came abroad “not as a potential leader in general” but as “the leader of that revolution which was actually growing... to create as**

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**quietly as possible for this revolution it's rigging of ideas, its organizing apparatus."**

**Plekhanov was at that time the acknowledged theorist of the movement. But when Lenin came to stand shoulder to shoulder with him the man who from a distance had seemed a giant turned out to be not so much of a giant after all, and no superstition reverence restrained Lenin from pushing his own views even against those of this hitherto undisputed leader. Plekhanov "deep in whom sat a revolutionary skeptic," nonetheless felt and admitted Lenin's strength at once. "That is the dough of which Robespierre's are made," he said to Axelrod. Vera Zasulitch described the methods in argument of the two men much as Goldsmith described those of Burke and Johnson. "George (Plekhanov) is a Borzoi (wolfhound); worries, worries and throws away, and you (Lenin) are a bulldog: you take a death grip." Lenin was very pleased and, thinks Trotsky, repeated the phrase with satisfaction.... "A death grip is just what is needed."**

### **The Defeat of the "Old Ones."**

**The London period did not last long. The center of struggle within the party was the paper "Iskra," which was edited by a committee of six, three "old ones," Plekhanov, Zasulitch, and Axelrod, and three "young ones," Lenin, Martov, and Potresov. The editors were scattered about Europe, Plekhanov and Axelrod in Switzerland, Zasulitch and the "young ones" in London, where the paper was actually printed. Plekhanov wanted the center moved to Switzerland. Lenin wished it to remain in London. Plekhanov won, and there was a general migration to Switzerland. In Paris Lenin gave three lectures in the High School organized by professors exiled from Russia. The profits went to the treasury of "Iskra." The lecture was taken to the opera. He had bought a pair of boots that were too small for him and had passed them on to Trotsky, who confesses that he can remember nothing of the evening except that the boots, of which he had at first been rather proud, hurt**

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him extremely, and that Lenin, who had already suffered from them, jeered unmercifully. They all went on to Geneva together, where Lenin, with the help of Zasulitch, turned Plekhanov's victory into a defeat by bringing Trotsky into the editorial committee, thus ensuring in serious questions the outvoting of the "old ones" by the "young."

Lenin's definitely anti-Liberal policy, urged by him on revolutionary Labour everywhere, was no new thing. Trotsky recalls a conversation on the subject after a meeting in a café in Geneva more than 20 years ago.

Vera Zasulitch (who never lost her sympathies with Radical Liberalism) complained that "we" (Marxist) were attacking the Liberals "too hard." "See how they are trying," she said, looking past Lenin but having him in particular in view. "In the last number of 'Osvobozhdenie' ('Liberation') Struve gives Jaures as an example of our Liberals, and urges the Russian Liberals should not break with Socialism, for otherwise the wretched fate of German Liberalism awaits them, and that they should instead follow the example of the French Radical Socialist."

Lenin stood at the table, a soft straw hat pulled forward over his forehead. (The sitting was already over and he was preparing to leave.)

"All the more need to hit them," said he, smiling merrily, and, as it were, teasing Vera Ivanovna.

"Then it's like this," she cried in complete despair, "they are coming to meet us and we are to hit them."

"Precisely. Struve tells his Liberals: Against our Socialist we must not use coarse German methods but subtle French ones, inveigle them, get around them, trick them and debauch them in the manner of the French Radicals playing with Jauresism."

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. August 2, 1924,**

**Concerning Lenin And Trotsky.  
Trotsky's New Book.  
Day Of The Russian Revolution.**

**[The article below deals with the actual outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution. An earlier article described the life of Lenin among the Russian revolutionaries of 20 years ago. A third and concluding article will deal with the difference between Lenin and Trotsky over the Brest-Litovsk negotiations.]**

**There is nothing in Trotsky's book about the 1905 revolution. After the account of Lenin's early career, with its continual emphasis on the concrete character of Lenin's preparations and ideas. ("His very jokes were utilitarian"), Trotsky turns at once to the spring of 1917. When, on return from abroad, he met Lenin in Petrograd on the fifth or sixth of May, he told him that he was in complete agreement with the theses that Lenin had published in April. Trotsky was then not a Bolshevik, but was the leader of a small independent group. He reminds people in passing that in this group were others who have not so often or so unkindly had it thrown in their teeth that they are comparatively new members of the Communist Party. These names include Lunacharsky, Joffe, Karakhan, and Sokolnikov.**

**Trotsky makes a new and interesting point that Lenin in 1917, while believing that the country was prepared for further revolution, was by no means sure that this would not be prevented. In May Lenin declared that "the country of workers and extremely poor peasants was 1000 times more 'Left' than Tchernov and Tseretelli, and 100 times more 'Left' than ourselves."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**“He unshakably believed that the masses were willing and able to make a revolution, but he had not that confidence with regard to the party Staff....” With all the forces and means at his disposal he tried to place the party under the pressure of the masses, and the Central Committee of the party under the pressure of the rank-and-file.**

### **Lenin’s Anxiety.**

**As the autumn drew on Lenin’s anxiety became almost unbearable. The second revolution was visibly preparing, too visibly, as Lenin thought.**

**“As in the July days, out Lenin firmly believed that “they” [the bourgeois “enemy”] would shoot us, so now he thought out for the enemy the whole situation, and came to the conclusion that the best thing from the point of view of the bourgeoisie would be to take us by surprise with force of arms, disorganize the revolution, and then strike at its several parts. Lenin overestimated, as he had done in July, the perspicacity and determination of the enemy, and perhaps also their material possibilities.**

**Trotsky was undoubtedly the leading figure in the preparation of the Bolshevik Revolution, and his methods certainly gave Lenin grounds for anxiety. Trotsky was justified only by the fact that the rival forces were torn 1000 ways by mutually hostile interests, internal scuffles, bitterness, and jealousies. For, with an audacity that would certainly have been blamed for defeat if it had not succeeded, Trotsky was playing with every card laid face upward on the table. The Bolsheviks were with every day gaining support among the working masses of the towns and there could be little doubt that at the next Congress of Soviets they and those prepared to vote with them would be in a position to supplant the existing moderate Executive Committee. The moment that should happen the Bolshevik cry of “All power to the Soviets” would no longer, as in July, find an Executive Committee unwilling to take power even if it should be offered. The naming of a date for this new Congress was**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**equivalent to naming of a date for the revolution. Lenin was horrified at the obvious connection between the planned revolt and the summoning of the Congress. "In any case," he insisted at one of the last of the preliminary meetings of the Revolutionary Committee, "the seizure of power should precede the Congress of Soviets. Otherwise they will smash you, and you will not be able to summon a Congress of any kind whatsoever."**

### **His Twelfth-hour Conversion.**

**However, the Provisional Government played into Trotsky's hands by allowing him to get warning of their intention to replace the Petrograd garrison by troops that were as yet uninfected.**

**"The attempt to change the garrison of Petrograd led to the formation of the Military Revolutionary Committee.... We got the chance of legalizing the preparation of the revolt which with the authority of the Soviet, and of binding it closely with a question that vitally affected the whole garrison of Petrograd [which was extremely unwilling to be sent to the front]".**

**Trotsky had his way, and so convinced were he and his committee of the hopeless weakness of the existing Government that they made all arrangements for the taking of power openly over the telephone, and simply began to give orders, as if with authority, before the old Government had actually been overthrown. But it was not until the very evening of the revolution that Lenin reconciled himself to the fact that they had refused to take power by more conspiratorial methods.**

**"I remember the tremendous impression made on Lenin by the news that I had summoned by written order the company of the Pavlovsk Regiment to ensure the appearance of our party and Soviet newspapers."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**“Well,” he asked, “and has the company, of come out of the barracks?”  
“It has.”**

**“The papers are being set up?”**

**“They are.”**

**Lenin was delighted and burst into exclamations, laughing and rubbing his hands. Then he became silent, thoughtful, and said, “well, it can be done in that way also. The main thing is, to take power.”**

**The Night of the Revolution.**

**The Congress met in Smolny Institute (once a girls school, and thenceforward, until the removal to Moscow, the seat of the Government). Lenin did not appear at the first session.**

**He remained in one of the rooms of Smolny, in which, I remember, for some reason or other, there was no furniture, or practically none. Later on someone put some rugs on the floor and a couple of pillows. Vladimir Ilyitch [Lenin] and I rested, lying side by side. But in a few minutes I was called – “Dan [Menshevik leader] is speaking and we must reply.” Returning after my speech in reply, I lay down again side-by-side with Vladimir Ilyitch, who of course, had no thought of sleeping. Every five or ten minutes someone came in from the meeting room to say what was happening there. And besides that, news kept on coming from the town, where, under the leadership of Antonov Ovseenko , the siege of the Winter Palace was proceeding, that ended by its storming.”**

**I imagine that 100 years hence historians will be glad of this curious glimpse of the leaders of the revolution at the moment of their triumph. But Trotsky is comparatively careless of intimate detail, and is more anxious to get on paper what he remembers of Lenin actually at work.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**“We Could Call Them Commissars.”**

**From the moment that the Temporary Government was declared overthrown (he says), Lenin systematically, in big things and small, acted as a Government. We had as yet no apparatus whatever: there was no connection with the provinces: the officials were sabotaging: the Railway Committee was interfering with our telephonic conversations with Moscow: there was no money and there was no army. But Lenin in all directions acted by means of decisions, decrees, and orders further in the name of the Government. Of course he was in this further than anyone from any superstitious reverence for formal incantations. He recognized too clearly that our strength was in the new State apparatus that was being built up from below, from the Petrograd districts. But in order to coordinate the work that went on above, from the deserted or sabotaging chancery's, with the creative work that was going on below, there was necessary just this tone of formal insistence, the tone of a Government which, today still tossing in emptiness, tomorrow or the day after will be a force, and therefore today is already speaking as a force.**

**Then there are glimpses of that frantic period of legislative improvisation in Smolny when more than once contradictory measures were published almost simultaneously. “My room and Lenin's,” says Trotsky, “were at opposite ends of the building. The corridor door uniting or rather dividing us was so long that Vladimir Ilyitch jokingly proposed to establish communication on bicycles....” It would have been impossible. I well remember that corridor, which was like a passage in an ant heap, people running to and fro, while the loud voices of the orators and the roar of applause sounded through its walls from concurrent meetings going on in the larger rooms beside it or below. Lenin asked what they were to call the members of their government.**

**“Anyhow not Ministers; that is an abominable used – up name.”**

**“We would call them Commissars [suggested Trotsky], only that there are already too many Commissars. Perhaps Supreme Commissars.”**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**“No, ‘supreme’ sounds badly. What about ‘Peoples’?”**

**“Peoples Commissar? That would do pretty well. And the government as a whole?”**

**“Soviet of Peoples Commissars.”**

**Lenin caught it up. “That is first-rate. That smells of revolution.”**

**MG. August 4, 1924.**

**Concerning Lenin And Trotsky.**

**Trotsky’s New Book.**

**Lenin & Brest-Litovsk.**

**[The following article describes some of the early difficulties of the Bolshevik Revolution. Earlier articles dealt with Lenin in London and the night of the Petrograd revolution.]**

**Speaking of the appalling disorder and muddle of the early days of the Bolshevik revolution, Trotsky says of the military staff, which also sat in a room of the Smolny Institute, the first headquarters of the Revolution:**

**“This of all the institutions was the most disorderly. It was never possible to understand who was giving orders, who was in command, and of what in particular. Here first arose in a general form the question of military specialist (officers of the old Army). We had already some experience on the point in the struggle with Krasnov, when we appointed Muraviev as Commander. and he in turn entrusted the direction of the operations at Pulkovo to Colonel Walden. With Muraviev were four soldiers and a sailor with orders to keep their eyes open and never to take their hands from their revolvers. (Muraviev eventually killed himself after attempted treachery on the front during the early stages of the Czechoslovak revolt in 1918.) This was the embryo of the system of**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Commissars. This experience lay in some degree in the foundation of the Supreme Military Consul."**

**"Without serious, experienced military men we shall never get out of this chaos," I said to Vladimir Ilyitch every time after visiting the staff."**

**"That's true, seemingly. But how can we prevent them betraying us?"  
"Appoint a Commissar to each one."**

**"Better still, two." exclaimed Lenin. "And muscular ones. It's impossible that we have got no muscular Communist."**

**Lenin on the Death Penalty.**

**There is a note on Lenin's view of the death penalty in a time of revolution. On Karmenev's initiative the law about capital punishment for soldiers brought in by Kerensky was abolished. This was indeed one of the first acts of the new Government.**

**"I remember.(says Trotsky) that this was in my presence and that I did not object. Lenin was not there.... When he heard of this first act of legislation he was endlessly upset. "Rubbish," he repeated. "How can you make a revolution without shootings? You surely do not think that you can deal with all your enemies while disarming yourselves? What other means of repression are there? Imprisonment? Who thinks anything of that in a time of civil war, when each side hopes to win?" It was clear to him that behind this decree was hidden an unthought-out attitude towards those incredible difficulties which were on our way to meet."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **Beliefs with a Method.**

**There is another note correcting the present widely propagated belief that even in the early days Lenin clearly foresaw how long a difficult was the path to the Communism that he preached**

**“I remember very well (says Trotsky) how during the first period in Smolny Lenin incessantly repeated at the sittings of the Council of Peoples Commissars that in six months we should have Socialism and should be the most powerful State.... This was a system of inspiring conviction. Lenin was teaching all to take hence-forward all questions in the frame of Socialist construction, and not in the perspective of an “ultimate aim” but in the perspective of today or the day after.”**

**Trotsky denies this was purely a pedagogic method. He speaks of Lenin’s “tense will, which at the abrupt turning point of two epochs compressed stages and shortened periods. He believed what he said. And this fantastic six months period for the arrival of Socialism represents a function of Lenin’s spirit just as much as his realistic approach to each problem of the actual day.**

**That is the difference between the man of action that Lenin was and the philosopher. Lenin’s beliefs, like his jokes, were to the purpose. He always believed what it was necessary for the leader of the revolution to believe. But it was only in the rarest cases that he allowed these beliefs, these pillars of fire by night and smoke by day, as they were for his followers, to distract his own eyes from the immediate stones and ditches at his feet.**

### **Brest-Litovsk.**

**Perhaps the most interesting passages in the book are those concerning the Peace of Brest-Litovsk, in which, as everyone knows, Trotsky’s part was a very prominent one and not wholeheartedly approved by Lenin. As**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

soon as it was clear that a general peace was impossible and that the peace offered by the Germans by no means corresponded to the Russian formula there were violent differences of opinion as to what ought to be done. Lenin's one idea was at all cost to preserve the Revolution in Russia, and he was for agreeing to any terms that would permit this. Trotsky, as soon as he reached the front on his way to Brest, realized clearly enough that there was no Russian Army capable of putting up any defense whatever. But – "I considered that at all cost it was necessary to give the workers of Europe a clear proof of the mortal hostility between us and ruling Germany.... It was precisely under the influence of this idea that I came in Brest-Litovsk to the notion of that pedagogic demonstration which was expressed in the formula "We stopped the war but do not sign the peace."

Lenin was attracted by the idea, but feared the risk, and asked, "What if they renew the war?"

Trotsky: "Then we shall be forced to sign peace, and then it will be clear to everybody that there is nothing else we can do. By that alone we shall deal a decisive blow to the legend of our secret connection with the Hohenzollern's."

Lenin: "Of course there are pluses here. But it's all too risky. At the moment there is nothing in the world more important than our revolution. We must at all cost put it out of danger."

"If the Germans Advance?"

But the risk was taken, and the Germans, shortening by a quibble the agreed notice that was to terminate the armistice, suddenly advanced. The hulk of the two ruling parties (Bolsheviks and Left Social Revolutionaries) believed then that a "revolutionary war," unarmed as they were was inevitable. Lenin insisted that they must at once agree to sign peace.

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**“And if the Germans nonetheless advance? And if they move on Moscow?”**

**“Then,” said Lenin, “We will retreat farther to the east, to the Urals, declaring all the time our readiness to sign peace. The Kuznetz basin is rich in coal. We will make an Ural-Kuznetz Republic basing ourselves on the industry of the Urals and the coal of the Kuznetz basin, on the proletariat of the Urals and on those of Petrograd and Moscow workmen whom we are able to take with us. We will go as far as Kamskhatka if need be, but we will hold out. The international situation will change again and again, and from our Ural-Kuznetz Republic we shall spread and returned to Moscow and Petersburg. But if we hurl ourselves senselessly into a revolutionary war and let the flower of the working class and of our party be cut to pieces, why then, of course, we shall not return at all.”**

### **The Sting of the Book.**

**He won his point. A worse peace was signed than that which they had at first refused; and before the year was out the international situation had been changed by the fall of the German Empire. At only one moment did Lenin waiver, at the moment when news came of the German landing in Finland. When he got this news he thought there was no way out of fighting, but in a few minutes he had regained his old position, that they had no right to risk the Revolution. “Three years later,” comments Trotsky, “we took a risk – this time on Lenin’s initiative-when we probed with a bayonet bourgeois and aristocratic Poland. We were thrown back. Where was the difference between this and Brest- Litovsk? In principle, none. But there was a difference in the degree of risk.”**

**The book is full of similar first-hand, eyewitness evidence on one after another of the crises of the Revolution. It concludes with a scornful criticism of Mr. H. G. Wells published “interview” with Lenin three**

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**speeches of Trotsky's – on Lenin's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, on Lenin wounded (1918), and on Lenin ill, – and the telegram that Trotsky sent from Tiflis on learning of Lenin's death.**

**The passage in the book that has most annoyed Trotsky's rivals is this:**

**“And what,” Vladimir Ilyitch asked me all together unexpectedly, “if the White Guards kill you and me, will Bucharin and Sverdlov be able to carry on?”**

**“Perhaps they won't kill us,” I replied, joking.**

**“The devil only knows,” said Lenin, and laughed. On which the conversation ended.**

**That passage is annoying to Trotsky's rivals because it reminds everyone that the “Lenin and Trotsky” theory of the Revolution's leadership was shared by Lenin himself. It is a most uncomfortable, comment, as from the grave, on the situation today.**

**MG August 11, 1924.**

**The New Stage Of The Russian Revolution.**

**Kamenev's Report.**

**Production & Private Capital.**

**Riga, July.**

**It would be difficult to find a more suggestive account of the present state of affairs in Russia, as seen from the point of view of the ruling party, than Kamenev's report on the work of the 13<sup>th</sup> Communist Congress. Here at least is something more detailed than the vague and**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**inaccurate statement that “the extremists have gained the day,” or that “the opposition has been suppressed,” with which abroad for the most part we have to content ourselves. Kamenev made his report to a meeting of active Communist workers. His summary of the work of the Congress became a summary of the present position in Russia, made not for foreign consumption but for people who, themselves on the spot, were to take part in the carrying out of the new program, and had themselves shared in the discussions which the Congress summed up and dismissed.**

**He began by pointing out that the Communists were now faced by tasks far more complex than those which faced them in the early years of the revolution. Then they were faced by plain, visible military opposition, now by something very much more subtle.**

**“We must reckon with the fact that this complication of the circumstances in which we work will progressively increase with every year, with every month, and that it will frequently be expressed in very contradictory forms.... We all understand that the development of the material well-being of the country, the raising of its material level, is the most undoubted plus, and that we must, as Communists exert our whole strength in this direction. At the same time we clearly realize that the growth of turnover in goods needs the growth of private capital.”**

**With the growth of trade also comes an increasingly marked distinction between different classes. “We shall continually have to reckon with the appearance not only in the economic but also in the political sphere of new bourgeois elements.”**

**Correcting “Bourgeois Influence.”**

**During the party discussion it was repeatedly pointed out that there was a danger of “bourgeois influence” on members of the Communist party,**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

particularly on those who by reason of their work came in contact with the money-making sections of the community. Hence the definite tendency to counter act this by “Labourising” the party, eliminating from the party, often most foolishly and unfairly, people with “bourgeois antecedents” (on this I shall have something to say in a separate article), and by limiting admission to the party to actual workers. The doors of the party were flung open on Lenin’s death and 200,000 persons, exclusively workpeople, were admitted by way of correcting “bourgeois influence” within the party itself. The Congress insisted that the party should be “directly proletarian in its general mass” and that it should, by educating young people and children, ensure that “the next generation shall continue the work at which we are struggling.” There has been a similar movement towards the “Labourisation” of the central organs of the party which, once upon a time, were made up of a very small group of people who for the most part, like Lenin himself, were not of directly working class-origin. In 1917 the Central Committee consisted of 13 members. Last year it was increased to 40, and now it consists of 53. Kamenev said that the admission of Krassin on the one hand and of Trotsky and Pyatakov on the other, in spite of their leading part in the opposition during the late discussions, was due to the desire to concentrate in the Central Committee all the talent they had, and so, as far as possible, to make up for the irreparable loss of Lenin’s leadership.

### **No Suppression of Private Capital.**

Kamenev referred to the money reform, and to the gradual lessening of the disparity between bread prices and the prices of manufactured goods, as proofs that the Communists were learning to use the levers for economic control which they had in their hands. He then came to the central question of the continuance of the new economic policy, which, he pointed out, had now lasted for as long as the militant Communism which had preceded it. He referred to the storm of propaganda, “intended to break off the Anglo-Russian negotiations and to prevent Franco-Russian negotiations,” to the effect that the departure of Lenin

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**meant the end of the new economic policy. He said that their enemies had hoped that, frightened by the growth of private capital, they would sweep away the new economic policy. The Congress had done nothing of the kind, but on the contrary had reasserted that “the new economic policy thought out by Lenin had completely justified itself and that we saw no grounds for giving it up.”**

**That did not mean that in 1924 they would do exactly what they had done in 1921 and 1922. They were now faced with a more complex situation. The increase of production and of economic activity was giving a wider field for private capital. But the Congress unanimously decided that the struggle with private capital ought to take the form not of its suppression, which would mean the arrest of the economic recovery of the country, but of an increase of economic activity, in which State and cooperative organizations must take a greater share.**

**That is to say, “Replace private capital, but do it in such a way as not to reduce the general turnover.” And further, “If we regulate properly the question of State trade and cooperation we, who have been able to make N.E.P. serve us hitherto (and it has served us) shall be able to force this new economic policy to serve Socialism to an even greater extent than it has in the past. And in that case our problem will be definitely solved.”**

### **Peasant Developments.**

**After insisting yet again that the road towards the economic elimination of private capital lay through the development of the cooperatives, Kamenev turned to the question of the peasants. In the country the effect of the new economic policy on the growth of private capital and the creation of employing and employed classes is even more visible than in the towns. He said: –**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**“The peasant market is for us the main market of our State industry. In future the buying capacity of the peasant market will dictate the tempo of the development of industry, and on the tempo of the development of industry, depends the tempo of the concentration of the proletariat on factories and workshops. The tempo of this consolidation of the proletariat will in general define our social strength as opposed to the whole sea of peasantry, and as against all kinds of petit – bourgeois tendencies”.**

**That is to say, that they cannot afford to do anything that would lessen the buying capacity of the peasants. He then referred to the signs of separation into classes among the peasantry, and pointed out that after the revolution the land had been more or less equally parceled out, and that the “line of cleavage between ‘hard fists’ on the one hand and ‘poor peasants’ on the other did not now follow the line of land ownership but the line of the ownership of the means of tillage, draught animals, improved agricultural implements, and, finally, the line of trading capital.” The richer peasants were able to enslave the poorer by being in possession of the means of cultivation.**

### **Helping the Poorer Peasant.**

**“In some villages already 50% are without horses.... This sort of proletarian is becoming a burden which hangs on our industry, increases the army of unemployed, is rejected by the village but not accepted by the town. This element should stand closest of all to us, but, at the moment when it cannot enter the proletarian family and has already left the peasantry, it may become an element disturbing to our whole society.”**

**Hence the extreme importance of helping the poorer peasant. This can be done by uniting the poor peasants into cooperative societies which collectively can obtain the use of the implements of cultivation without becoming dependent on the rich. By means of credit the poor peasants**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**must be enabled to hire horses, etc., from the State instead of from the rich peasant.**

**But here again they come upon the same sort of contradiction that faces them in the towns. "We wish to export 400 million poods of flour, but we shall not get these from the poor peasant but from the middle peasant and the rich." Export will consequently be enriching just those classes in which capitalist tendencies are strongest. Kamenev thinks that the way out of this dilemma will be by the support of cooperative agriculture, which, as he admits, cannot be created in a month or a year. For some time yet they must expect to see the export, which is for the good of the country as a whole, strengthen precisely those classes of the peasantry which are fundamentally opposed to them. Cooperative agriculture, however, must gradually come to compete with the rich individualistic peasants precisely as in the towns cooperative trading is competing with the private trader. In the country, as in the town, there must be no attempt to hurry the process in such a way as to lead to the lessening of production.**

**MG. August 12, 1924.**

**The Official Burial Of Russian Communism.**

**Bucharin's Oration.**

**New Economic Policy Confirmed.**

**Riga, July.**

**Among the many recognitions de jure which have followed the English there has been one which has passed almost without comment in the press, without demonstrations in the streets, without even kinematographic record of the kind that was arranged for the recognition of the Russian Union by Italy. Yet this recognition is far more important than most of these diplomatic victories and is actually the key**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**to a great deal of what seems particularly puzzling and contradictory in Russia today. It was not a recognition of the Bolsheviks but a recognition by the Bolsheviks. It was the de jure recognition of the New Economic Policy. Nothing has obviously been changed by it, but it has marked a very considerable change of outlook, and it is precisely that change of outlook which here, there, and everywhere must be taken into account in any attempt to understand the opening stages of the present new period in the history of the revolution.**

**The actual fact of this de jure recognition was announced by Bucharin to the Congress of the Third International. He said: –**

**“After the introduction of the New Economic Policy we Russian Communists, and in part of our friends of the foreign parties, almost all without exception had the feeling that we were doing something not quite right, that we ought to apologize for the New Economic Policy. In a more delicate form this apologetic orientation consisted in looking at the New Economic Policy from the point of view of its political expediency, as a political concession to the small bourgeoisie. We did not think that the New Economic Policy was in itself expedient and rational, but considered that we had had to introduce it on political grounds. But now, it seems to me, we can with quiet consciences say that the truth was precisely and exactly the opposite. We must in general formulate the question of the New Economic Policy as follows: – “The only proper economic policy for the proletariat – ie , the policy that ensures the growth of the forces of production – is precisely that which we call the New Economic Policy.”**

**From Expedient to Principle.**

**This of course, involves a radical review of the period of Militant Communism and a restatement of the Bolshevik position before March,**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**1921, when Lenin, in actual fact using political rather than economic arguments, brought about the abandonment of the old uncompromising position and the conditional permission of internal trade. Lenin had then to face something equivalent in its way to the English “Hang the Kaiser” public opinion of autumn, 1918. For three years his Communists had run an unwilling Russia on lines which permitted them to do incredible things in the fervent belief that Socialism was not so very far off. Nothing less than a faith of clear outlines and vivid, simple, not too distant goal could have enabled them simultaneously to take the peasants corn and to lead those same peasants in a victorious civil war. It is true that there were all sorts of contributory causes, but it must be recognized that one essential of that three years struggle was a fervent belief in those who enforced them that the measures of Militant Communism would lead almost immediately to the millennium. There was no tradition of authority behind them, and the belief in the immediate or almost immediate possibility of Communism took the place of those “stimulants of fearful potency” that Cromwell’s men drank from another source, and was the thing that made possible their discipline and gave them their power of leadership among an agnostic, puzzled, hesitating multitude.**

**The sudden abandonment of Militant Communism could not have been brought about by Lenin if he had merely recommended a more expedient economic policy. Such a reversal of theory would have knocked the bottom out of the Communist Party. Instead he brought it about by his array of hard, uncompromising facts to prove, not that Militant Communism was undesirable, but that its non-abandonment might well mean the general collapse of the revolution as a whole in the face of the natural cumulative resentment of the peasants. It was brought about in a desperate hurry, “a question of days if not of hours.” It left the working fanatic belief of three years untouched, and was to everybody else in the party, if not to Lenin himself, nothing more nor less than an imperative, urgent strategical retreat, a successful attempt to avoid a disaster and to retain the initiative for the future.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**The retreat was obvious, the retention of the initiative much less obvious, and the psychological effect on great masses of the Communist party was one of profound disheartenment. Only the lapse of years, have gradually acquired sense of perspective, the visible signs of the economic recovery of the country, and a series of counter – irritants in the way of internal quarrels have partially healed that disappointment and led to the drastic rewriting of history, involved in the de jure recognition of the New Economic Policy and the summary putting in its place of the background of improved economic theory that was the setting of the civil war.**

### **The Funeral Oration.**

**Bucharin, the official spokesman, used no apologetic coloring. With a broad brush he simply painted out the old signposts and painted in the new, just as they paint out time – honored names of streets and paint in new ones. He went even farther than those observers who at the time (remembering that many of the measures of Militant Communism had been forced upon non—revolutionary nations by the needs of the German war) pointed out to the Communists that the difference was only that they waved red flags while other people waved national ones and doing the same uncomfortable things. Now the Communists themselves admit that Militant Communism was no more than a series of measures compelled by the needs of an armed struggle. Says Bucharin : –**

**“It was a rational distribution of existing stores. We seized or requisitioned from every peasant in any place everything possible for the needs of the Army and the town proletariat. That was the only possible policy, because without victory in the civil war it was impossible even to begin to build up Socialism.”**

**The New Economic Policy is no longer a regrettable, inevitable retreat but the normal line of advance from which the party was diverted by the**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

civil war into the temporary use of Militant Communism. Again I quote from the words of the official recognition: –

**“The New Economic Policy is not an amendment of Militant Communism. On the contrary, the New Economic Policy is the sole expedient policy of the proletariat. And Militant Communism is nothing but an amendment of this policy. For Militant Communism is a necessity caused not by the demands of a rational economic policy but by an immediate political struggle.”**

**Seldom has an accepted view been more emphatically reversed.**

**Discipline for the Heir.**

**The New Economic Policy, then, loses the stigma that attaches to a retreat even strategic. There is no longer to be any question of its abandonment or of any return to Militant Communism except in case of war, and possibly not even then. The Communist Party as a whole settles down to the prospect of the New Economic Policy outlasting all but perhaps its very youngest members. It is no longer a temporary “concession,” but a condition of affairs for all practical purposes permanent. It has been obvious for some time that the Communists could not abandon the New Economic Policy even if they wished. They have now acquired a solid theoretical basis of reasoning for not wishing to do the impossible. Consequently they find themselves impelled to seek in all directions for means of ensuring the revolution itself against the risks of infection by what they cannot but consider the noxious by-products of that policy. The purposeful alteration of the character of the party membership with the object of giving a preponderating weight of votes to those persons least likely to be influenced by the “new bourgeoisie,” the increase of “class consciousness” in the choice of the material for higher education, even the unchecked growth of anti-intellectualism in the rank-and-file of the party, all these, beside many others symptoms of the time, can be ascribed at least in part to this new**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**realization that the New Economic Policy is a lasting thing, and that the revolution will have to reckon with it and it's by products over a period of many years.**

**Hence the new precision of the party leaders in distinguishing between the policy and some of its results. Krassin stated the new line very neatly when he said to me that he considered the New Economic Policy one thing and "N.E.P. quite another. The New Economic Policy allows private trade, leaving the State free to compete with it by all means, fair and unfair, in the belief that in the long run private trade will be economically squeezed out of the market without in any way checking the growth of the country's production. In the meantime private trade is flourishing sufficiently to produce a number of undesirable by-products, summed up as "N.E.P.," Gross contrast between rich and poor, employers and employed, unproductive luxury and equally unproductive. beggary, and all the temptations and influences of capitalism. "We," said Krassin, "are for the New Economic Policy but against N.E.P." they are also, naturally, beginning to insist that Lenin long ago distinguished between the two things (as he certainly did), and the point is such a ticklish one that two such men as Kamenev and Stalin can write angry letters to the newspapers because a misprint in the report of a speech made one of them seem to misquote Lenin in such a way as to suggest that he did not make the distinction, and the other suggested that not the printer but the speaker was at fault. It was as if two school men were at logger heads over a slip in quotation from one of the Early Fathers.**

**MG. August 26, 1924.**

**Russia Emerging From Its Money Crisis.**

**Where Stabilization Pinches.**

**New Currency's First Sequel Soaring Prices.**

**The Return To The Normal: Gold Now Only Useful For Hoarding.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**Riga, August.**

**The first thing that I noticed on returning to Russia was that in changing money at the frontier I no longer received for pounds sterling enormous numbers of millions of Soviet roubles. Instead, I was given considerably less than 10 gold roubles for each pound. (Approximately, 12 English pounds are equal to 10 chervontzi, or 100 of the new roubles.) The next thing I noticed was that on passing from the official money changer to the buffet my very simple lunch of soup and carbonado cost, when the price paid was translated back into English currency, nearly double of what it cost on the occasion of my last visit. Last time I paid in millions of Soviet roubles (though the bill was calculated in gold roubles). The apparent effect of the disappearance of the Soviet roubles was that, whereas last time the actual amount in English money was about what I should have paid for a luncheon at the Cheshire Cheese, this time it was what I should have paid for a really handsome dinner at a flagrantly expensive restaurant. The same phenomenon was noticeable in the restaurant car, where a bottle of very mild beer cost a rouble, or rather more than two shillings in English money. Lemonade was called nectar, and cost half a crown. There were obviously two sides to the question of the stabilization of the currency, and it was clear enough to me that I was on the losing one I believe the same thing happened when Germany brought in the retenmark , Mr. Keynes was right when, as it seemed, he daringly prophesied that Russia would soon be able to stabilize her currency; but, from the point of view of the English traveler, it would have been a good deal better if he had been wrong. I found that in Moscow the cost of living for foreigners which for some time has been high, was now almost unbearably so. The plainest meal in a restaurant which in England would be considered decidedly second-class cost 10 shillings. For a meal really satisfying to a North – countryman of normal appetite one would have had to pay considerably more.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

### **Why prices Rose and are Falling.**

**A considerable proportion of the prices in restaurants and shops must be set down to the heavy taxes and rents. High prices are also partially due to the habit of mind brought about during the long period of roubles that became value less as fast as they were printed, when anybody with anything to sell had not only to allow himself a margin of profit but also to ensure himself against the diving rouble by adding a further amount, say 100 or so percent, to cover the probable fall between the time he expected to sell and the time when he should be able to change the money received into the more stable currency of goods. A natural lack of faith in the new thing, together with, of course, natural greed and the desire to get as much as people would pay, led to the putting of higher prices in the new roubles than would be justified if those roubles were taken at their face value. And, as those roubles are not to be bought except at their face value, the unfortunates who have to buy them and then change them into food and drink and clothes and cab fares naturally suffer.**

**There are, I think, signs that the period of abnormally high prices may be coming to an end. Empty pockets are going to bring the prices down. Before I left many of the shops were desperately advertising in their windows that ALL their goods were now to be sold at a reduction. The reduction named was never less than 20%, and in many cases was 50%, a sufficient proof of the unjustifiable character of the original price. Things have indeed come to such a pass that the only people who can afford to buy are speculators and, I should fancy, cab men. The bulk of the Government employees, Communist or otherwise, have the hardest possible task to make both ends meet since their wages have not been raised to a sufficient extent to balance the loss of payment in kind (for example lodgings, for which they have now to pay rent) which they formally received.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **A First Annual Budget.**

**There is no need to say more to show that money reform is not a triumph universally appreciated by the individual, though, of course, it frees him from the constant practice in elaborate arithmetical calculation which occupied much of his time in the days when he did all his buying and selling on the steps of the rapidly – moving staircase of an unstable currency. For the State, on the other hand, and for the economic recovery of Russia it is, however painful, a step forward, a real achievement, and all the Soviet leaders with whom I discussed the matter were exultant.**

**I asked Sokolaikov, the Commissar of Finance, to tell me in what precisely, from his point of view, the money reform consisted. He replied at once: “In the fact that the Budget is now in order.” He does not mean by that his Budget would satisfy Mr. Snowden, but simply that it has been brought from the region of fantastic fairytale into that in which normal financiers can at least understand each other. It is now a Budget capable of being critically examined, and no longer a mere lamentable account of the Russian means of temporizing with the deluge by the addition of ever – increasing floods of paper money. Hitherto they were never able to see more than a month ahead, and often had to bring in supplementary estimates and set the printing press working overtime after a fortnight. Now they have a three – monthly Budget, and at the end of this month Sokolnikov will have the personal triumph of introducing the first Budget to cover a whole year, and a Budget in which, he believes, they will be able to cover their deficit without the issue of fairy gold in the shape of paper money.**

### **Throwing Gold on the Market.**

**I asked him how the money in circulation compared with the amount in circulation before the war. He gave me the following table: –**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

### **In Circulation**

**( gold Roubles)**

<b>October 1923.....</b>	<b>301milliom</b>
<b>January 1924.....</b>	<b>385</b>
<b>February1924.....</b>	<b>384</b>
<b>March1924.....</b>	<b>438</b>
<b>April 1924.....</b>	<b>449</b>
<b>May1924.....</b>	<b>494</b>
<b>June1924.....</b>	<b>517</b>

**The pre—war amount was approximately 2000 millions.**

**Except in a few outlying districts, where no doubt there are still remnants of the old Soviet currency, the whole of the money in circulation today consists of State bank notes, Treasury notes, silver money, and paper for the very small values, exchangeable on January 1, 1925, for silver. By January, 1925, Sokolnikov says, they will have 90 million Roubles and silver and 5 or 6 million in copper.**

**The keystone of the now stabilized currency is the chervonetz, a banknote representing 10 gold roubles. At first it looked a little as if it were kept at par only by monopolized money – changing, and that within the country its face value in gold was merely nominal, so that it would speedily begin to rise in pursuit of the old paper currency. There was in fact a time when for 10 gold roubles (in gold) you could buy 13 of the new roubles. But the State proceeded to enter this market itself, and coining gold 10 – rouble pieces, threw them on the market, with the result that within a very short time gold fell in comparison with the chervontz; and at the present day a “10-rouble gold piece is worth something between 10 roubles and 9 roubles 50 kopecks of the new currency. Gold is not accepted in payment by the State, taxes, etc.,**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

having to be paid in chervontz roubles. Gold is consequently of use solely for purposes of hoarding. Meanwhile gold and platinum mining continues. Sokolnikov says that Russia's actual gold fund has increased since January, 1922, and that in this year 40 million roubles worth of gold and platinum have been obtained.

### **Taking Care of the Kopecks.**

The smaller change retains its stability, as it were, by courtesy in the shadow of its rich relation the chervontz. The silver money now coming into circulation is of the same quality as the silver money of before the war. That is to say that a rouble in silver money does not contain a rouble worth of silver. It has, therefore, as it always had, something of the character of paper money, and, supposing that the peasants, in natural delight at having once more money that really tinkles, should start hoarding it in stockings and mattresses, the State can profitably continue to coin enough to prevent any very serious crisis in small change. They say they have plenty of silver for the purpose. But, as far as I could judge, the crisis in small change has already passed in the towns, where it was felt during the introduction of the new currency. It is not likely to follow a different course in the country.

You hear Russians say that the new rouble is worth only half the Czar rouble in purchasing power and that is certainly true. But a phenomenon of political as well as economic significance is the respect paid to this new currency, even the little scraps of paper which pending the issue of copper, are still issued as small change. These scraps of paper, one would think, would be no more valued than the old Soviet notes, very much better and more ornamentally printed and for face values of millions. But, whereas in the old days it was a common thing to see people impatiently crumple and throw away millions that have become really unpleasantly ragged and greasy, you now see people preserving with the utmost care a handful of paper kopecks. They know that a tram fair that is eight kopecks today will be eight kopecks in the weeks or

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**months-time, whereas in the old days big amounts became small change and small change became value-less so quickly that there can be no one in Russia without a collection of ornamental and useless paper. If this belief in the new money can be preserved it will do a great deal towards turning the “Nepmen” from a speculator into a decent trader, and businesses Russia from a feverish gamble into a normal activity**

**MG. August 28, 1924.**

**“Fighting It Out” With Private Capital.**

**New Policy In Russia.**

**Confidence Of Leaders.**

**Riga, August.**

**Recognition that the New Economic Policy is “the only proper one for the Proletariat” does not mean any theoretical relaxation in the Communist dislike of private capital and private trading. It merely means that these things are not to be prohibited, that they are to be allowed to continue in the certainty that at present they are essential to the well – being of the country and in the belief that by the time the State will have become able to perform their functions they themselves will have found the game not worth the candle. Thus, so far from the new attitude of the Communist being a recantation of former beliefs it is a renewed affirmation of them. The Communist are so convinced that State industry and State trading are economically an advance on private industry and trading that they are prepared to let the two fight it out while carrying on business, in the perfect confidence that sooner or later their own favorite will win. However, they do not for a moment pretend that they are going to remain aloof, hold the ring, and see fair play in the struggle. For them, the whole point of the revolution is that it enables the State to be unfair to the private capitalist.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

### **A New Commissariat.**

**“The competition on the market on the part of the Proletariat is no less than a specific new form of the class struggle.” Consequently everything is fair, and though the private capitalist will not find himself legally abolished as in the period of militant Communism, he will find it quite useless to expect any justice from the referee.**

**“Competition on the market by the Proletariat” means competition by the State itself, by the Cooperatives, and by the state trust, etc. which do business “on behalf of the Proletariat.” The new Commissariat of Internal Trade is intended as a sort of general headquarters for coordinating and directing this competitions which, as the Communist now see it, is far more subtle than any “taxing the private trader out of existence” which was once the notion of some of the more simple – minded. It means the assumption by the State of the functions often performed in other countries by large combines which, by dumping or by refusing to sell, contrive to throw their rivals out of business or to raise the selling price of a commodity. The Communist hope by the same methods to throw out of business their rivals, the private capitalist (not at once, of course, but by a lengthy process), and, in smaller things, to prevent any change in prices of which they do not approve. They see all this part of the struggle with private capital as a struggle between rival combines, and they think that their own combine is the better armed of the two.**

### **Squeezing a State Trust.**

**This clear conception of the form which the struggle with the private capitalist is to take has not been reached suddenly. It may have been in Lenin’s mind. It was certainly not in the minds of the bulk of his followers during those years when, “gritting their teeth,” they watched the first effects of the New Economic Policy that they then regarded simply as a**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**concession forced from them by the hostility of the peasants. They have reached it by an adventurous process of self – education. During the years which, as distinguished from those of the exultant slow murder of the rouble, may be described as those of the roubles reprieve and subsequent astonished convalescence, the Communist in charge of the financial organs of the State, under the tutelage of several specialist of the old regime, have come to find that they control an extraordinary number of levers much more subtle in their effects than the simple, obvious levers of confiscation and discriminating distribution of which at first they were exclusively aware. They have been tentatively trying to effect first of one and then of another of these fascinating, newly-discovered levers and, experimenting at first on the unfortunate bodies of other State institutions, have convinced themselves of the universal operation of certain financial laws which elsewhere are accepted as axiomatic. For example, they found with ingenious glee that by refusing credit to one of their own trust they could compel it to bring down the prices of the goods it manufactured. Comrade X of the trust thought this very unfair of Comrade Z of the Commissariat of Finance, because it lessened the beauty of the balance – sheet he had been hoping to present. But Comrades A, B, C, and D, looking on and observing the desired fall in prices, applauded Comrade Z loudly, and said that they had never seen anything so clever in their lives. Would he please do it again? And Comrade Z, delighted, did it again, until some of the trusts were squeaking for mercy.**

### **Routing the Bread Speculators.**

**Well, if you can make one of your own trust squeak for mercy and, although with the ear of the Government, squeak in vain, what can you not do to the private capitalist? And, as the result of a number of experiments, it has been discovered that a great many things of this kind can be done in far more effective ways than by decreasing maximum prices, forcibly closing down shops, or pulling the small private trader together with his sack from the roof or the buffers of a railway wagon.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**The Communists are now in the exciting, delectable position of youthful engineers who sit surrounded by levers the purpose of which they have just learnt. They are exultantly looking forward to using them.**

**They were recently delighted by a little skirmish with the private trader over the price of bread at the time when the news of a threatened draught led to a panic in the districts which remembered with horror the famine of 1921. It was said that the panic was artificially stimulated by the traders, but the memories of 1921 are too recent to need much artificial stimulation. The price of bread flew up. The State organizations were supported with quantities of flour from the State stores and sold at the usual prices, with the result that the bread speculators suffered severely, and the price of bread on the open market dropped as swiftly as it had risen. It is action of this kind that they have in mind when they announce, as they now do announce, "We can affirm that we shall conquer hostile and backward economic forms by the market struggle between socialized undertakings and other economic forms."**

### **New Consciousness of Power.**

**The complete reversal of the old apologetic attitude towards the New Economic Policy is largely due to to this new consciousness of power. Also, of course, for those who are not so sure of this there is the natural inclination to make the best of a bad job, a moral form of protective colouring. Convinced that they cannot without disaster give up the new economic policy, it is natural that as soon as possible they should discover good reasons for not wishing to give it up even if they could. Many of the Communists who were most depressed in 1922, regarding the New Economic Policy as disguised Menshevism, are now visibly buoyant, having made up their minds that it is a thing of their own, and that the initiative is in their own hands after all. On the other hand, the extraordinary confident attitude of, for example, Sokolnikov and Krassin is due to actual experiment in economic methods of influence as opposed to administrative.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Administrative methods will be retained for dealing with foreign trade. They do not, in the present state of the world, feel themselves strong enough to control economically their private traders in alliance with the traders of the rest of the world, with which position they feel they would be faced if they were to abrogate the monopoly. Further, the possession of the monopoly of foreign trade is a stout weapon to their hands for the internal economic struggle. In Moscow today if you want foreign products (cocoa, for example) you must, whether you like it or not, buy in a cooperative store. You cannot, without infinite trouble and not always even then, induce the State to import exactly what you want, or even to give you leave to import for your personal use. (I found many of my old fishing friends almost desperate for lack of decent tackle.) But, though at present they make only limited use of it, the State trading institutions can retain in their own hands the whole of the internal trade in foreign manufactured goods, and there is no reason why that trade should not be very large indeed.**

### **Who is Winning?**

**Apart from this advantage which the State trading institutions have over others there are many more. The State can depress the balance against the private trader in 1000 ways. It can tax him at a higher rate than the socialized or semi-socialized institutions. It can tax the individual who trades privately more than it would tax him if he were to sell his trading ability to a cooperative institution. It can charge more rent to private than to cooperative firms. It can give credit only to those economic forms of which it approves (though it has already discovered that in so doing it may itself be heavily out-of-pocket). In general, the State can turn the private trader into a Ismael against whom is every man's hand, and so long as it can do this without creating a feeling that it is itself lessening the general supply of commodities it will meet with no opposition whatever from the public, to whom it is a matter of indifference and not of principle where it buys. On paper, indeed, with**

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**all the advantages it has, the State should beat the private trader out of the field. In actual fact, only stout partisans one way or the other are very certain as to what is happening in this dim, shadowy struggle, which, though touching every side of Russian life, is ignored by 99% of its participants. Statistics are of no avail because it is impossible to get at the figures. The Communists themselves cannot say where State trade leaves off and private trade begins, how far private persons are benefiting by State trading, or what private transactions may or may not be actually strengthening the State, which has had a lion's share maybe in the original manufacture and sale of the goods concerned. One thing, however, is clear, and that is that the most important article of State export – namely, flour – is actually strengthening throughout the country the innumerable small private capitalist who produce it.**

**MG, September 1, 1924.**

**Russian Communism Since Lenin's Death.**

**A New Koran.**

**Leaders Fear Of Heresy.**

**Riga, August.**

**A year or two ago, when Lenin sat in his room in the Kremlin, there was a general feeling among the Communist, shared indeed by many who stood wholly outside the party, that all threads led to the center and were there competently disentangled or combined, in any case thoroughly understood. Russia did not seem so puzzling a network of contradictions as it seems today because, while he was there, people were inclined to leave the understanding of it to him. If a change were needed he would make it. Up there, in that little room, was the center of Russia, of the world itself, and minor people could proceed about their business. Then came the years of Lenin's illness, when the mere**

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**continued existence of this paralyzed man was enough to keep people quiet and confident, like the stone trumpets in the fort at the head of the valley which, blown by the winds, kept the people of the valley in subjection long after the conquerors who had built them had withered into dust. Then came the party discussion which is brought to a panic-stricken end by Lenin's death. And now: no Lenin, a leadership is so nebulous that no one can be quite sure who leads, and in Lenin's place a President of Counsel who is better loved than respected, a thoroughly likable, popular man who has never swayed the party or had a disciple in his life. And this at a time when, what with the breakdown of the international boycott of Russia, the enormous development of private trade, the coming of age of a whole generation that has grown up under the revolution, there is need of some half – mythical brain to keep people together, to prevent contradictions of policy, to be a court of last appeal, and to give the impression at least that somewhere above the melee is someone who really understands.**

### **A College of Priest.**

**No one can have that impression today. History proceeds without waiting for its great man, indifferent as to whether they catch the train or are left with their baggage looking helplessly after its disappearing lights. The Revolution is already at a stage quite different from that at which Lenin left it. It is moved on without him, and it is now perfectly clear that no one has taken his place. Instead Lenin has been set beside Marx, Leninism beside Marxism. There is no High Priest, but there is a College of Priests whose business it is to expound. Every speaker claims Lenin as his authority. Communists in dispute bandy texts and confute each other with chapter and verse out of the 24 – volume storehouse of political ammunition which Lenin left behind him. This new Koran has already proved itself as fruitful as the old and rival interpretations. But with Lenin's departure the tone of discussion has grown thin and reedy. The disputants seem, somehow, less than life – size. Smaller men, smaller manners; the large way of discussion which allowed Lenin to**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**preserve the devoted attachment of people with whom he differed on this or that point of tactic is gone; instead, the orthodox, or rather those who are strong enough to insist that they are the “orthodox,” bring to the criticism of alleged seeders from “Leninism” a rancorous bitterness that Lenin reserved for only a very few of those who in his opinion were dangerously misusing the theories of Marx. The general tone of dispute is lean, and though the defeated so far keep up the attitude of good – tempered submission that was natural under castigation from Lenin, their loyalty is strained and embittered. They are conscious that the wielders of the rods are only humans like themselves, and consequently that there is a loss of dignity and chastisement by them which they never felt when Lenin himself, smiling but severe, felt it necessary to lay on.**

### **The Fetish of Unanimity.**

**Worse than the tone of discussion is the fact that serious discussion of any kind is frowned upon. The heat and fury of the party scrimmage which began last November and ended like a blown-out match on Lenin’s death has resulted in a new fetish of unanimity. People already disturbed by the bitterness and personalities into which, before the end, that dispute developed was so startled by the blow of Lenin’s death, coming at a moment when various sections of the party were very openly airing their differences (small as these actually were), that they were left not with the mere mistrust of the so – called opposition but with a foolish terror of opposition generally. They have forgotten that at all the important crises of Communist history the party was at sixes and sevens, and that the decisions finally taken and afterwards generally approved were often the decisions urged by those who, when the crises arose, had been sixes rather than sevens, and sometimes (as in the case of the Brest Peace) in a very much smaller minority. Under Lenin the pride and strength of the Communist Party was in the fact that it acted unanimously in putting into effect the result of any vote, and not at all in unanimous voting. Within the walls of the party debates was a sanded cockpit for rival opinions whereas if the present tendency continues**

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**criticism will become synonymous with heresy, and the party will be as intolerant of individual deviation from the general line as it is the mass of school-boys at an English public school. Unpleasant exclamations are given of this new worship of unanimity. I give the most usual for what it is worth: the Communist Party is a working-class party, and the working class is impatient of and does not understand hair-splitting; it wants its party to rule and not to discuss.**

**The Thing that is Lacking.**

**This argument is of interest in connection with the proletarianisation of the party, to which I will refer again. It also illustrates the mutual hero worship now cultivated between the party organization and the Lowest Common multiple of the party members as opposed to their Greatest Common Factor. It tends to turn the rank-and-file of the party into a clique on the one side and to turn their leaders into popular entertainers on the other. This kind of hero-worship, leaders trying to echo in advance the note of the crowd and the crowd hastening to record its "orthodoxy" or its agreement not with ideas but with whatever may be said by Comrade So – and – so (illustrated ad nauseam at the Congress of the Third International by the foreign parties who have caught the infection), may turn into apathy but, I think, is more likely to be blown away like mist over a swamp at the first breath of any personality strong enough to take an independent line. It cannot be permanent. It is the symptom of a leadership that is not sure of itself. He is a weak schoolmaster who meets difficult questions, or indeed any questions whatever, with an hysterical command to his pupils to "Be silent."**

**We have, then, a party thoroughly frightened at the sound of its own voice, seeking its way (at all cost unanimously) through the labyrinth of contradictory tendencies in which it finds itself. Yet this does not mean any weakening of the Government in Russia. That is as firmly established as ever, and is acquiring the force of tradition. A whole generation has grown to manhood under it. The names of its institutions**

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**painted over their doors are already shabby with age. No one dreams of its overthrow. There is no open opposition within the party. There is also none outside it. Simply Lenin is gone and the smaller men who are left are more and more conscious of their inability to replace him. Even the party discussion was not allowed to damage the State apparatus, and the "leaders of revolt" are still in their places as administrators of Russia. Trotsky, for all his drubbing at the clumsy hands of Stalin, is still Trotsky and head of the War Commissariat. Sokolnikov is still keeping the pound and below the chervonets on the exchange. Outwardly everything is going on as before; only, it seems to the outsider, who can, of course, touch on the fringe of things, that something is lacking besides Lenin, and that the thing that is lacking is just that healthy freedom in debate within the party that in the old days seemed to be the tonic that kept the whole organism vividly alive.**

**MG. September 2, 1924.**

**Russian Communism Since Lenin's Death.**

**Weeding Out The Intellectuals.**

**Intolerance In Rank And File.**

**Riga, August.**

**It must be remembered that the actual Communist Party is not the party that Lenin left. The upper works remain, with the exception of Lenin, but the foundations have been shifted, and shifted in a definite direction. The 200,000 new members who answered the appeal after Lenin's death were drawn exclusively from the working classes. Nor was this an accident. It was a conscious form of insurance against the influence on members of the party of the byproducts of the New Economic Policy, a form of recognition that that policy had come to stay, and that something must be done to keep the policy an instrument of the party and prevent**

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**the party from becoming an instrument of the policy. There was a fear lest the revolution should become “respectable” in its old age. Comments of satisfaction and admiration even in newspapers abroad were taken as a warning. Nor were warnings lacking at home. For example under militant Communism no Soviet official had any temptation to grow rich. He could do nothing with his money if he had it. Under the New Economic Policy the temptation is very considerable, if only to satisfy the natural desire of his wife to be charmingly dressed. All round him are people who are making more money by private trade or business than he can make by work as a civil servant. And he may, as a civil servant, be doing precisely the work of trading on a large scale which enables non— civil servants to grow rich. He may bring off satisfactory deals without enriching himself in the slightest. He may even be doing this in close association with men whose satisfactory deals have an immediate effect on their wives wardrobes and their own dinner-tables.**

### **Temptations of the New Economic Policy.**

**It is little wonder that all over the country people are being found out in making private profit out of public business. Sometimes one or two men are affected. Sometimes the whole board of a factory or a trust absconds when its embezzlements can no longer be concealed. The temptation is in the air. The immortality is so shadowy an immortality. There is no great weight of public opinion against the transgressors, and Communism in fighting this kind of dishonesty is fighting an infection more difficult to deal with than malaria. Right and left it throws into prison old party members who have allowed the new conditions to bring about in themselves a change of spirit that cancels the revolutionary service of years. But this makes merely a record of discovered individual error. During the party discussion it was repeatedly insisted that “Nep” was gaining influence on the party as a whole. Something had to be done to prevent that; something had to be put into the other scale to balance**

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**this influence. Before Lenin's death it had already been decided to flood the party with new members.**

**Lenin had always insisted on the expressional character of the party, had always tried to subject its leadership to the influence of the rank-and-file, and the party as a whole to the influence of the working class, believing that this was the way to save it from the intellectual isolation that had overtaken other parties whose actions and language has ceased to be plainly intelligible for the people whose support they desired. The party decided to use this method for the counteraction of the influence of "Nep." They decided to admit a huge number of actual workmen who could be counted upon to be free from the infection. This has meant a very definite change in the character of the party itself. In 1916 59% of the party were workmen. But of the new members admitted since the revolution the percentage of workmen decreased steadily until 1922. In 1917 it was 56.7%; in 1918, 40%; in 1919, 38%; in 1920, 33%; in 1921, 30%. It rose again to 52.7% in the last year, and this increase was accompanied by a weeding out of the party in which the persons of non-proletarian origin stood the best chance of being weeded out. Many most devoted revolutionaries were thus weeded out because their parents had been rich, or from the old official class, and a number of suicides of young people who could not bear being elbowed from the ranks of the party to which they had given the best years of their lives were the result. And now this huge influx of purely proletarian members makes a very different party from that which in the old days followed its non-proletarian leaders, like Lenin himself. It is a significant fact that a new Lenin presenting himself today for admission to the Communist Party would almost certainly be rejected because his father had earned noble rank. A new Chichern would not have the slightest chance of the admission.**

**Lack of Respect for Culture.**

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**Mistrust of those classes which have in the past provided the greater number of the actual revolutionary leaders is, of course, a not unnatural consequence of revolution. Those who, regardless of their origin, threw themselves into the struggle when the party was harried by the police and scorned by their political rivals are inclined to mistrust those of their own class who joined the revolutionary banner only when it has become an official flag. But the phenomenon at present observable in Russia is something different from this mistrust. It is more conscious, and has been definitely cultivated. It has been exploited on theoretical as well as practical grounds by people who do not want to see the Russian go the way of all other revolutions, and see in this a means of keeping it, as it were, “Bohemian” and in revolt, a means of preventing it from becoming “Philistine” with material success. It has been done in the name of Lenin, but it is likely to result in the throwing overboard of a very important piece of Leninism. Lenin, himself a son of the intelligentsia (his father was an inspector of schools), was the last man to hate the intelligentsia for being educated, much as he might scorn their temperamental failings from a revolutionary point of view. He never dreamed of making the Bolsheviks an anti—intellectual party, and that is what it now seems possible that they may become. Lenin was all for persuading the learned to come to the help of the revolution. The movement now is all the other way. The learned are eager enough to help, but the revolution is inclined to snap its fingers at them and to go on its way without them. There is a tendency to assume that the intelligentsia are particularly susceptible to the influence of “Nep.” There is also a tendency to look down on other than manual labour.**

**For example, the hours for intellectual workers have hitherto been less than those for manual workers. Articles are being written in the party press urging that this is unfair, but omitting to point out that for the mass of intellectual workers no hours exist, since they can never put their work away as a workman puts away his tools but are always at its command. Again, I am told that as long ago as 1920 Petrograd workingman Communist were saying that the old revolutionaries of the**

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**educated class were necessary only as specialist to be consulted and that the responsible post should be given to themselves. So long as Lenin was alive as a standing example of an intellectual they could not wish to be without, this tendency could not to develop. One feels it now everywhere. Educated men, loyally working for the State, Communist as well as non—Communist, ,must work now with the consciousness that they will be superannuated at the earliest opportunity to make way for young men who have the advantage of less education but working – class parents. There is a growing lack of respect for acquirements which, sometimes healthy enough when it means a confident belief that it is possible to learn, is often ludicrous and melancholy, as in the case of the Communist student who remarked, “Given three months to study geography, anyone of us could fill Cnicherin’s place.”**

### **Despair of Older Leaders.**

**This is a very different spirit from that of a few years ago, when workmen Communist were want to say that “Lenin and Trotsky have been right so often that they are probably right now, even though we do not understand what they are at.” There is a change, too, in the spirit of many of the older men. They have gone, the best of them, through two severe crises of belief. The first was when the New Economic Policy was introduced, which seemed to them to destroy everything for which the revolution stood and to be the proclamation not of a strategic but of a general retreat. Many have never been able to recover the old fanatic fervor with which they faced impossibilities before. They have lived thenceforward on the lower plane. And a second crisis was the recognition, to them surprising, that the New Economic Policy, with it shops full of luxuries, it’s taverns, it’s rich people, was the only proper one, and that the militant Communism into which they had flung their lives was after all not a gallant attempt to bring about the millennium at once, but only a bundle of practical measures forced on them by the civil war. Some feel that they have outlived their time. Others have lost faith in anything. They look with a sort of despair at this new generation that**

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is springing up around them, noisy, pushing, arrogant, with more of an eye to the approbation of their immediate chiefs than to any flaming, even if impossible, ideal for humanity. Some bury themselves in the routine of work and simply close their eyes to everything that is happening outside their own, commissariats. Others escape to the writing of reminiscences. Those, of course, are happiest who have persuaded themselves that the New Economic Policy really is an integral part of the revolution, and, like Sokolnikov and Krassin, see from day to day results which, in their opinion, are proofs that they are right. And then there is this enormous mass of new members from the working class, whose task it is to preserve in the party its consciousness that the revolution is not yet achieved, and that the New Economic Policy is a means to an end and not an end in itself. It is difficult to find anything except the party ticket that unites all these and many other different groups of Communists. The party has never been less homogeneous than at this moment, when for the first time all its discussions result in unanimous votes.

**MG. October 17, 1924.**

**The Anglo – Russian Treaty.  
Russian Reply To Lord Emmott.**

**Riga, October 7.**

The “Izvestia,” the official organ of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Republic’s, prints a leading article under the title “The English Treaty and our Enemies,” which is actually a reply to the letter from Lord Emmott printed in the “Manchester Guardian” of September 15. The “Izvestia” takes Lord Emmott’s four points one by one, together with the editorial comments on them, and sets out the

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**view of Moscow on each one. On the first point, that the Soviet Government has not yet renounced its “predatory principles”: –**

**“We have frequently underlined with regard to the Anglo-Soviet Treaty that its significance from the point of view of principle consist in the recognition of equality of rights between the two opposite economic systems which exist in the present historical period It is on account of this recognition of their equality of rights that the whole reactionary capitalistic fraternity have jumped to their feet, and in the summary produced by Lord Emmott the first place is taken by the demand that this equality of rights should be removed. The critics of the treaty are still hoping to bring the Soviet Republic to its knees. They are still trying to secure that instead of a bargain between two opposed systems there shall be simply a victory gained by the capitalist system over the Soviet system.**

**In this consists the central question of the whole struggle. English reaction has not yet understood that this victory is impossible....”**

### **Russian Loan and British Unemployment.**

**On this second point, that the loan is a bad speculation, the “Izvestia” quotes Lord Emmott’s second letter of September 17:**

**“Does any businessman who knows the Bolsheviks believe that the loan, under their management, will earn its own interest?”**

**“So (says the “Izvestia”), so long as the present economic system obtains with us, business people will be unable to furnish us with a loan. And in this point English reaction comes in the most decided manner into conflict with the broad masses of the English nation. It must not be forgotten that a sufficiently large portion of the proposed loan is to remain in England in the form of orders, is to enliven production which is suffering from marasmus, is to lessen the sufferings caused by unemployment. The critics of the treaty are denying to English**

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**production the stimulus which should be the result of our loan in the immediate present and of our economic restoration in the future. If we remember how strongly during the elections that the broad masses of voters reacted to the perspectives of an enlivenment of English production in the present and the future as a result of an agreement with the Soviet Union, we shall understand how sharply in this question the reactionary elements of English capitalism come into conflict with the widest masses of the population....”**

**The third point is Lord Emmott’s protest against the proposal that a 50% vote of the bondholders shall be held to be sufficient to justify the cutting down of the claims of all. Here the “Izvestia,” quoting from the “Manchester Guardian” the statement that if the British Government were to wait until all bondholders were satisfied no treaty would be possible, says: -**

**“Actually the agreement, so important for us and for English economy, is possible only if in England itself the reactionary part of the creditors, dull worshipers of the past, are deprived of the power of destroying an economic agreement between two great nations.”**

### **A Fundamental Issue of Our Day.**

**The fourth point is that on which Lord Emmott, after complaining that no difficulties had been solved by the agreement, replied to the suggestion that it had set up an apparatus for solving them by the statement that this machinery could be set up without the treaty. On this the “Izvestia” says: -**

**“Here is shown the characteristic shortsightedness of the English practical businessman. For him it is only an agreement when there is a concrete bargain, final with all the figures. An agreement in principle for him is no agreement. But world history is moving forward, and in our extraordinary complex historical period it is impossible to get out of**

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**political and economical blind alleys by means of concrete bargains alone without the solution in principle of historical questions. The treaty of August 8 consists of an attempt in principle to decide a conflict of unheard-of complexity between two economic systems, an attempt at an historical compromise. If English men of affairs do not understand this, then history will step over them to the agenda list, and the agreement will be concluded by others, for sooner or later it is inevitable.”**

**The “Izvestia” goes on to say: –**

**“The Treaty of August 8 is a compromise and involves sacrifices on the Russian side, if not greater at least no less than those made on the English side. People in Russia are already asking themselves if these sacrifices are justified, as they would certainly have been if the Anglo – Russian Agreement had been all that it might be in the business of securing peaceful relations. The Anglo-Soviet Treaty ought to mean agreement along the whole line, it should be the corner – stone in the settlement of world relations. Has it been such? No, reply the broad masses of our Republic at the site of what is happening along the whole political front from the Far East to the Baltic Sea.**

**If the English capitalists destroy the Anglo-Soviet Treaty they will be punishing themselves, for they are not likely to get from us on another occasion, the sacrifices we have made now. They will be punishing themselves, for in England itself the working class is developing and growing stronger with every day. The English working class with this profound instinct knows that in the Anglo – Soviet Treaty it is faced to face with one of the fundamental issues of the present historical process, just as the widest masses of our Republic see one of the fundamental issues of the present time in an agreement with the English people. If an agreement with the Liberal – Conservative coalition turns out to be impossible for us, then this agreement will be made tomorrow; it will be made with the English Labour majority.**

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**This does not mean that we are now renouncing the treaty. But if the English capitalist renounces it so much the worse for them.”**

**MG. October 31, 1924.**

**The Zinovieff Letter.**

**Soviet Agents Criticism.**

**Internal Evidence.**

**“A Factory Of False Documents.”**

**Riga, Wednesday.**

**I showed the English text of the supposed the Zinovieff letter in Saturday’s “Manchester Guardian” to M. Araloff, the Soviet representative here. He said:**

**“Apart from the easily established fact that Zinovieff was in Kislovodsk on September 15, and therefore could not have signed it, the document is full of internal evidence of its own falsity. The actual phraseology is not that of the Third International, which would hardly describe what they consider as a rather hard bargain between the Russian proletarian and the English bourgeoisie as an ‘agreement consolidating the ties between the proletariat’s of the two countries’ ‘again, in this connection they would hardly speak of ‘business collaboration between the British and Russian proletariats.’ The forger has been a little too free in peppering his production with proletariats. Does it not strike you, to, as odd that the document should be so perfectly designed, for its purpose, carefully confirming one by one every accusation made by the reactionaries.”**

**“There is another point that needs explanation. The forger forgot that if Zinovieff wished to give such instructions he had no need to give them**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

in such a document. There was a Congress of the Third International in June and July at which many British Communist were present. This was fully reported in the papers, and the resolutions were published. The forger omitted to provide a plausible *raison d'être* for his document.

“No. This is one more in the long series of documents which miraculously turn up in the hands of those best able to make use of them at all crises of Russian relations. You remember the documents discredited even by Lenin’s worst enemies, in July, 1917, purporting to prove that Lenin was a German spy. Then the big batch of forgeries which, after being vainly hawked about, were finally bought by the Americans in 1918. Then the documents from German sources used in one of Lord Curzon’s Notes. I should have thought that by this time people were learning to suspect these documents, which, however clumsily forged, are invariably very cleverly timed to produce the desired effect. We have known for some time that there was a regular factory of false documents in Poland, and I believe it probable that this is from that source.”

### **The Norwegian Letter.**

I asked M. Araloff about the letter alleged to have been sent to Norwegian Communists at the time of the strike. He said he did not remember it, but added that in any case it would not be surprising if the International Workers Organization sent greetings and wishes for victory to the strikers, as this has been done since the 19<sup>th</sup> century by way of showing international solidarity.

### **The German Letter.**

The Moscow Sunday papers print a Third International letter to German workers and the workers of the world. This letter is a public protest against the imprisonment of Communist, the outlawry of the party, etc., and winds up with a summons to vote for Communist at the election.

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Generally it is a harmless production, not at all resembling the English letter.**

**Reprinted In Moscow.**

**Thursday.**

**A whole inside page of the "Pravda" of Tuesday is filled with the story of the alleged Zinovieff letter, which is printed in full so that the Moscow citizens, who for their sins have had many years daily practice in reading the literature of the Third International, may observe for themselves the difference between forgery and reality.**

**A leading article signed by Karl Radek and entitled "God Save the King and his Provocateurs" accuses the Foreign Office of fabricating the document and the whole bourgeois press of using it against Mr. MacDonald in the elections. It accuses the "Manchester Guardian" of a lapse "from its one-time decency," describes the actual document as "a falsification even more stupid than those which usually appear in the White press," proceeds to quote the instructions about organizing cells in the Army, preparing Red officers, etc., and points out that this alleged order is supposed to be given to a party consisting of a few thousand members only and in the very first stage of its agitational activity. "Only blockheads could believe that it is not a clumsy forgery."**

**Radek quotes from Mr. McDonald's book on Labour policy about the need of a strong man with a large broom in the Foreign Office, regrets that Mr. Mac Donald was not the man and could not get the broom, and says that at least his eyes should have been opened to the possibility of the document being a forgery by the very circumstances in which it was produced.**

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### **Rykoff's Criticism.**

**Rykoff, president of the Council of Peoples Commissars, spoke on the subject at his session of the Executive Committee and said that the document was simply a method of election campaign. "Even in the heading of the letter attributed to Zinovieff, to say nothing of its absurd contents, forgery was obvious to every well – informed person." He continued: –**

**"We are not going to complain of lack of gentlemanly behavior towards us on the part of English lords, but we shall decisively struggle against the impudent forgeries, especially those that are made with the object of spoiling relations between the Workers Republic and the English working class. Such forgeries have been repeated and more than once in the practice of the bourgeois parties with regard to the Soviet Union. But this is the first time forgery has been used so determinedly, and for the first time, without any verification, a perfectly obvious forgery has served as a ground at sending us an official Note on the part of a friendly Government."**

**He added, that he saw proof that there were still many enemies of peaceful relations with the Soviet Union, and reminded his hearers that their only guarantees of peace lay in the successes in their internal work and in the economic recovery of Russia.**

**"Economic Life" has a leading article which says:**

**"Supposing the trick succeeds, friendly Anglo-Soviet relations will be broken off and the treaty not approved by Parliament. Anglo – Soviet economic financial relations will return to the position of 1921. It is doubtful if such a movement is in the interest of English capital itself.....the calculations of English capitalist that the Soviet Union will go farther in making concessions to them than it went for a Labour Government is obviously mistaken."**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. November 3, 1924.**

**Trotsky And The Red Document.  
Britain Not Conscious Of Its Forgery.  
Radek's Complaint.**

**Riga, Sunday.**

**Trotsky, writing in "Pravda," assumes that the "red" document incident is of more importance in elections than in diplomacy, and, indeed, except for a word or two in Rykoff's speech, there is nothing to show that Russians realize that the incident threatens Anglo – Russian relations.**

**Radek publishes in the "Pravda" an open letter to Mr. A. Ponsonby, Mr. E. D. Morel, and other founders of the Union of Democratic Control in which he refers to the forgeries on which Notes were based in the past, and complains that Mr. MacDonald entrusted to the same officials who were responsible for the use of the old forgeries the task of verifying this new one. He points out that "the aim and, in part, the result of these forgeries is to undermine confidence in the treaties concluded by the Soviet Union."**

**Russia, in his opinion, must do something to counter them. He says that a society will be formed to "study the regime of forgeries, etc.," and to publish in all languages a detailed account of them,, with facsimiles, "to clear the atmosphere of the world from a band of scoundrels who think that with regard to the Soviet Union everything is allowed." He suggested that Mr. Morel and Mr. Ponsomby will understand that this operation should be done by themselves.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**Trotsky does not believe that there has been a conscious use of forgery. If acting consciously “they would have prepared a better – thought-out and credible document.” Trotsky finds the significance of the whole story is the misunderstanding of the Bolsheviks by their enemies, or as the Bolsheviks “know in advance in a general way how their enemies will react to this or that event.” Other sentences were: –**

**“Mercilessly struggling with us, the most Conservative and strongest bourgeoisie of Europe does not understand us. That is why it’s leaders fall into the trap of their own blind hatred.” “The whole incident will, of course, be liquidated one way or other – that is, falsely smoothed over both in the Parliamentary and the diplomatic plane. But it will remain in the much wider plane of revolutionary development as a clear and, for us, encouraging symptom. Our enemies do not understand this. We understand them. Not because of our or their personal nature, but because we are a rising class and they a class that is going down.”**

**MG. November 4, 1924.**

**Political Situation As Moscow Sees It.  
Manchester Toryism A Sign Of War!**

**Riga, Monday.**

**Steklov, writing in “Izvestia,” considers the British elections as the beginning of a new era in the struggle with the growing Labour movement, which is better diagnosed by its enemies than by Labour itself. Socialism “now stands before the English bourgeoisie as a concrete threat,” and Steklov foresees ultimate fusion of Liberals with Conservatives.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**He comments in particular on the Manchester elections. "Manchester for a long time has been considered the citadel of Liberalism. Only during the war did the Conservatives capture it, and afterwards lost it again. Now the Conservatives have recaptured Manchester. That shows that the bourgeoisie considers the situation now crystallizing as a state of war, this time not foreign but internal class war between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat for the dominating position in contemporary society."**

**Radek, in "Pravda," points out that the Conservative strength in Parliamentary seats is greater than their strength in the country, and does not believe they will remain in power for their constitutional term. He refers to the letter incident. "Liquidation of this incident is desirable in the interest of the Conservative Government itself. It would facilitate further relations between the two Powers. These relations are necessary no matter who is in power in England, and are now more necessary for England than before, because the international position of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has been considerably strengthened after recognition by France."**

## **ADDENDUM**

Arthur Ransom would make one more brief trip to Russia in 1928. Following his return to England in 1924 he was assigned by the Manchester Guardian to cover the political revolution in Egypt followed by the political revolution in China. He returned to England in late 1927. Returning with Evgenia to his home Low Ludderburn in the Lake District he was very shortly sent by the Manchester Guardian back to Russia in February 1928. The principal issue was the fall and exile of Leon Trotsky and Karl Radek as well as many other leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. He spent most of February in Moscow. When he returned to England he wrote nine essays (dispatches) for the Manchester Guardian describing in detail the Russia of 1928

**MG. March 10, 1928.**

**An Inquiry In Russia. I**

**End of an Epoch.**

**Elimination Of Old Leaders.**

**How It Has Come About.**

**[Mr. Arthur Ransome has now returned from his investigations in Russia, and we print below the first of a series of articles in which he will record his conclusions.]**

**There is nothing in the outward appearance of Moscow to suggest that the revolution has just passed through a serious crisis. An observer looking for "symptoms" would notice on the one hand that it was much more dangerous to cross the streets, because of the great increase in motor traffic, particularly "taxis" and the big Leyland motor-busses, and on the other hand the reappearance of queues outside the shops that sell milk, butter, and soap. When he had to cross the street he would think, perhaps rather than ungratefully, of increased business and prosperity. When he noticed a row of people waiting to buy butter he would be reminded of difficulties that he had at one time thought the**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

revolution had outlived. Not until he has been some time in the city would he begin to realize that it is impossible to discuss either increased prosperity or the reappearance of butter queues without reference to the long struggle which has just ended with the complete discomfiture of all the better known leaders of the early period of the revolution.

As long ago as 1921 Lenin was disturbed at the thought of the future, because of the rapidity with which the old Bolshevik leaders were dying off. Someone said to him, "well, we have done our work and can go. The new shift is ready to replace us." Lenin replied, "You are wrong. It is too early to go yet. They want another five years of teaching." A year and a half later the trouble among the personalities of the party had begun that was to collaborate with death in clearing the way for "the new shift." The last words of that Lenin wrote were intended to postpone, if possible, the end of the struggle that had begun before his death and ended early this year. If Lenin himself had died in 1921 his death would have been a staggering blow to his party and to Russia. But his death was spread over several years. Lengthening periods of illness had accustomed the party to doing without him. When he died, at the moment when it was thought that he was recovering, his death came as a grievous personal loss, but, politically, Russia realized that he had been dead long before and that the party had already recovered from the shock of his departure.

### **The Fallen Leaders.**

In the same way, a few years ago, nothing but a new revolution could have swept away the men who were nearest to Lenin, the little group who were his immediate instruments. That group included Trotsky, Zinovieff, Kameneff, Krestinsky, Kursky, and Rakovsky. These men were the Commissars of War, Finance, and Justice, and those to whom was entrusted chief local authority in Leningrad, Moscow, and Kieff, the three capitals of Russia. Now every one of those six men is without authority, disgraced, either expelled from the Communist Party or reduced to political nonentity within it. This has been accomplished without bloodshed, without revolt. It has been accomplished by a process comparable with that of Lenin's long drawn out dying, and

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**gradual change in the party and in Russia, accompanied by the slow forging of something strong enough to destroy them, strong enough even to force them to lay, as it were, their own political heads-up on the block. Their elimination has been costly, but it is been very much less costly than would have seemed possible half a dozen years ago. It seems now to be an accurate expression of changes that have taken place in Russia.**

**At the same time, the actual event has been made possible by a single man. To Stalin belongs the credit and the blame both for making the "opposition" and for destroying it. He produced the resentment that was the cement holding together the heterogeneous and centrifugal parts of the opposition. He also built up the machine that could deal with it. Lenin, dying, left to the party a "testament" or last word, in which he referred to the personal conflict between Trotsky and Stalin, foresaw the dangers to the party that might result from this conflict, characterized Stalin as "too rough" and urged that he should be removed from the General Secretaryship on the ground that if he were to remain there a schism would be inevitable. This document was not published at the time, though later a version of it, said to be inaccurate, was published abroad. It is now known that it was read by Stalin in the Politbureau. He read it, fresh from his victory over Trotsky, whom, with the eager help of Zinovieff and Kameneff, he had been busily discrediting when Lenin died, and offered to resign there and then. His offer was refused and he remained, to drive to Trotsky's side his recent allies and at last to bring about the schism which Lenin had foreseen.**

### **Stalin's Triumph Over Trotsky.**

**People wonder at Stalin's power. No one attributes to him the genius that no one denies to Trotsky. He is a man of Asiatic character, unrelenting will, with no Achilles heel of temperament and with an infinite capacity for biding his time. His forging of the weapon with which he conquered Trotsky needed a little more than a simple mathematical calculation. His post was that of General Secretary, a post not particularly important until he held it. It is obvious that the secretary of a committee of 10 is less important in that assembly than the secretary of the committee of 20 Stalin worked steadily for the**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**increase of the Central Committee. In 1920 that committee consisted of 19 persons, 12 of whom are now dead or in opposition. After the 14th Congress it consisted of 46, and after the last (15th) Congress it has been increased to 71. The old intellectual revolutionary nucleus which Stalin had set himself to destroy has been simply overwhelmed and outvoted, especially since the Central Control Commission, intended to avoid such catastrophes, has swollen from 5 to 195 and been used latterly simply as an ally of the majority of the Central Committee.**

**The history of the growth of the Opposition is not that of the formation of a definite school of thought, but of the gradual driving under Trotsky's "anti-- Stalinist" banner of all the old leaders who came in turn to be less jealous of Trotsky's brilliance and intellectual pride than conscious of the dour weight of Stalin's increasing power. That power has been consistently used to stifle discussion of any kind, to harden party discipline, to lessen the resemblance Of the Communist party to a debating society, and to increase its resemblance as a political machine to that of Tammany Hall. It was consequently bound to unite in revolt all the more romantically minded of the revolutionary leaders; in fact, precisely those who, while invaluable in the running of the revolution, were decidedly less useful is the running of the country.**

### **The Opposition Program.**

**This is reflected in the opposition program, which, no doubt unconsciously, tends towards the re-creation of those circumstances in which the romantic, revolutionary intelligentsia found itself most at home. It came to be a disturbing program asking for something like a reversion to military Communism in dealing with the peasants, accusing the party of sacrificing revolution to prosperity, hitting at Thermidorian reaction, envisaging the possibility of revolutionary war, denying that possibility of "Socialism in a single country" belief in which makes it possible for an internationalist party to devote itself chiefly to the development of Russia. It came at last to be a denial from many very different points of view that all was going on for the best.**

**The mere existence of that program was disturbing and hateful to the rank and file of a party which had settled down to the task immediately**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**before it, and found them hard enough without being further bothered by all sorts of doubts as to whether the task were worth the trouble. It is not surprising that it was easy to find support in the party for all measures tending to limit discussion or that, when these measures have driven the Opposition leaders to the desperation which can alone explain the last scenes in the drama (to be described in my next article), the Opposition failed altogether to gather any popular following.**

**It was perhaps natural to expect after the elimination of the revolutionary intelligentsia a swaying of the party to the Right. No such thing is visible. The party is paying for its victory by the temporary adoption of much of the Opposition program. It is, for example, pressing on the rich peasants at least as hard as the Opposition would have pressed had it secured the victory. I do not believe that if Trotsky were in Stalin's place it would be possible for an outside observer to detect at the moment any difference in internal or external policy.**

**At the same time the atmosphere of the party is unhealthy. Its victory is costed dear. It has recovered from something like an attack of scarlet fever, and for some months it will be engaged in convalescence. The elimination of the old revolutionary leaders marks the end of an epic of the revolution. It has, however, been an ending long drawn out, and it would be most unwise to attempt to define the new epoch, which began indeed long before the old one ended. One thing, however, can be said, and that is that the transition from the old epoch to the new and has been accomplished without lessening in any way the stability of the regime. That is as strong as ever.**

**MG. March 12, 1928.**

**An Inquiry In Russia. II.**

**How the Opposition Offended.**

**Their Punishment.**

**How Trotsky and Radek Went to Exile.**

**[Mr. Arthur Ransome has now returned from his investigation in Russia,**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**and we print below the second series of articles in which he will record his conclusions.]**

**Partially on account of the poor coordination of the Russian State censorship with the policy of the Russian Communist party, the opposition seems to people outside Russia to have been suppressed on account of its ideas. The oppositionists inside Russia seems, happily for themselves, to be under a similar illusion, which is fostered a little by the speeches and writings of their suppressors. When, however, two or three are talking on this subject and addressing neither a public meeting nor the press, it soon becomes evident that it is not the character of the ideas rather unevenly shared among the oppositionists that has brought them to destruction. It is there insistence on using these ideas for the purpose of disturbing the peace and bothering people who have come to be more concerned with getting on with their immediate task than with their ultimate aims.**

**The opposition at it's culminating point (November 7, 1927) united a number of persons holding oddly contradictory opinions. These persons were united less because of any program they wholeheartedly shared than because of their resentment of the means employed to prevent them from getting a proper hearing. They would seem then to be united in some sort of defense of free speech. Yet this could hardly be so, for they had shown in the past that free speech in itself was not a thing that they considered particularly valuable. Indeed, they had taken a fairly active part in its suppression. They suffered not for any abstract principle but for their active resistance to a regime in the Communist Party which they had felt increasingly oppressive. If it had been simply a question of their opinions they could have remained in the party and waited until events alter either their opinions or those of the party majority. It was, however, not a question of ideas, but one of personality, of change in the actual character of the party leadership, which made the struggle one in which opinions were not so much banners as weapons.**

**If this had not been so it would have been extremely difficult for the party to eject them. They, tactically, gave themselves away by allowing themselves to be exasperated into giving circumstantial proof of their**

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hostility to the very party to the service of which they had given a great part of their lives. Almost all of them accept without reservation the idea of the dictatorship during which a single party has a monopoly of political legality. They did not want to form a second party. Yet step-by-step they were driven to actions which could be interpreted in no other way. They then went farther. In 1917, when any of them contending parties wished to push home a debatable point it called its supporters into the streets and made a peaceful demonstration. For anybody who remembers 1917 the point of a peaceful demonstration is that it measures the forces a party will be able to put into the field in case a demonstration is not peaceful at all. The moment the oppositionists had been exasperated into trying this way to estimate "their support in the masses" they had put themselves into their enemy's hands and the ultimate suppression was a matter to be decided merely by his convenience. In a country in revolution, for a party to call its supporters into the streets is as much as to recognize the possibility of civil war. Stalin's victory was assured as soon as he had driven his opponents into making this single fatal mistake.

### **The Turning – Point.**

Things began comparatively quietly but the battle of ideas, the mere discussion in the party, had ceased to be of real importance as long ago as the summer day in 1926 when some opposition members of the party held a meeting in the wards beyond the Sparro Mills. The Communist Party was ruling Russia, but these Communist met in secret, had their passwords, and established sentinels against possible appraisals. That meeting would have been enough to give formal reason for the exclusion from the party of every member who took part in it. It was of course, discovered, and Lashevittel a member of the Central Committee who made a speech, presently found himself on the way to Harbin to take charge of the Chinese Eastern Railway. The party moves slowly, to strike at last a heavier blow after more flagrant proof of conspiracy. Smilga, for factional activities and breaches of party discipline, was sent off to Siberia with a post to fill. The opposition took the opportunity to turn his departure into a demonstration. The battle of the portraits began. The Yaroslaval Station, from which he left found itself decorated with portraits which had not been seen for some years, portraits of

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**Trotsky, Zinovief and Kameneff. It was a quite successful demonstration and brought the oppositionists markedly near to their punishment. Here was a man subjected by the party to a polite like form of banishment, and here were members of the party using his departure to make a demonstration against the party leadership.**

**Still Stalin held his hand. Then came proofs of the careful organization of the opposition with ciphers, a secret printing press, and all the traditional equipment of an illegal party. The party machine began to move. A number of expulsions brought the opposition to the desperation which alone explained their behavior during the November celebrations of the 10th anniversary of the revolution. Every form of insult was used against them. All the past services were forgotten. Cities named in honor of their leaders were renamed. Their books disappeared from the shops. Their portraits had already disappeared. Every official tongue was called upon for purposes of vilification. The leaders of the Red Army proclaimed that Trotsky's share in its creation had been grossly exaggerated, and even that he had really done it much harm. Such was the general fear of the machine (it can hardly have been fear of the opposition) that no considerations of old friendships counted. The "poet laureate," Domain Biedny, jeered at his closest associates. Rakovsky found himself bespattered by an intimate colleague. Everything that could be done was done to drive the opposition to desperation. It was done successfully, and the joint opposition and party fiasco of November 7 was the result.**

### **A "Peaceful Demonstration."**

**This affair has never been adequately described. It seems to have been supremely silly on the part of everyone concerned. As far as I could make out in Moscow, the party leaders were very well aware that the opposition planned a "peaceful demonstration" on that day, and decided that it was best to let them make it and then to use it for their final their discomfiture. The general rank and file of the party were in holiday mood and could be counted on to present any attempt to interfere with the program of the day. Preparations were made to deal locally with the expected demonstrations. It is otherwise impossible to explain the quality of the missiles thrown at the opposition demonstrators. It was**

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**announced that chance spectators had been so indignant that they had thrown their lunches at Trotsky and other orators. If that is true it can only be said that, at least so far as eggs and vegetables were concerned, the quality of the lunches was very poor.**

**The band portraits played a great part in this childish performance. Smilge (home from Siberia) had a flat on the route of the processions. At the right moment a huge banner with portraits of Lenin, Trotsky, and Zinovieff appeared at the window. Soldiers sent up to remove it fished for it with long poles and hooks from the roof. Oppositionists seized the polls from out of the windows. Sometimes the people up above would gain an inch or two, sometimes those at the window. Finally a lucky stroke from above tore the portrait, Lenin's. Elsewhere, Trotsky tried to speak, amid a deafening din and a shower of decomposing matter. In Leningrad, Zinovieff and Lashevitch (home from Harbin) spoke in the street and were immediately involved in a free fight, from which Zinovieff took refuge in a doorway, thoughtfully left open, to find himself received with open arms by agents within who kept him under arrest until later in the day. Lashevitch paid with many bruises for avoiding friendly doorways and fighting it out in the street.**

**Eyewitnesses informed me that the attitude of the lay populace was one either of complete indifference, or of amusement, or of a marked desire not to be mixed up in any fracas that might ensue. Thus, while persons armed with "lunches" for that purpose were bombarding Trotsky, other persons were to be seen removing themselves as rapidly as possible from that dangerous vicinity. The most effective opposition demonstration was not Russian, but was organized by the students of the Chinese University, of which Radek was once the Rector. He had been degraded from Rector to Lector, but said that as Chinese pronounce their "R's" like "L's" it really did not make any difference. It had not affected his tremendous popularity among the students, and on this occasion they did their best for him. They marched out with their banners, with portraits of Stalin and all the proper slogans for the celebration, and betrayed no evil intention until they had actually entered the Red Square before the Kremlin, where the processions were being welcomed by the Government. They had, however, need more elaborate banners than usual, and a given signal pulled strings**

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whereupon their official banners rolled neatly up like maps and alternative matters unrolled in their place, with portraits of Trotsky and Zinovieff and, besides these banned ambulance, slogans of reprehensible character. Loyal forces dealt firmly with these ingenious Orientals, and many people who were in the square at the time saw little but a sudden inexplicable struggle. The day ended without bloodshed. I have heard it said and heard it denied, that there were revolver shots at Trotsky's motorcar. I think it most unlikely. There have been no bloodshed, but the 10th anniversary of the revolution had been spoiled, and the resulting indignation was such that now, in the final scenes of the long struggle with the opposition, Stalin was able to sit silent and even to take the role of one who would deplore too great harshness in the punishment of his opponents.

### **Wholesale Expulsions.**

The opposition had been maneuvered into actions that it could not defend. The Stalinist majority decided to put a stop to it forever. There were wholesale expulsions from the party. Oppositionists were treated simply as counter revolutionist and were handed over to be dealt with not by the party but by the G. P. U. Some were imprisoned. Others were left in freedom for a long time waiting for their fate to be announced to them. Some were honestly shocked to find that they had come so far towards actual revolt and recanted and repented honestly enough. Others recanted meanly and unworthily. Others stuck to their guns. Zinovieff and Kameneff were left off with management to nearby districts, where they are said to be engaged in writing a book against of their later associates, particularly Trotsky. On hearing of Zinovieff's recantation Trotsky remarked, "He's third appearance in the role of Judas."

Radek, ejected from the party, dismissed from his work, with all newspapers closed to to him, lost his room in the Kremlin and for a long time did not know what was to happen to him. At last he was told to go to the G. P. U to receive his ticket and he was sent off to Tobolsk. On a Sunday in January. He parted at the station from his wife and the little daughter who was born while he was imprisoned in Berlin. It got into the train, reappeared at the window, and with a breaking voice "cheered

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**for the" genuine, Leninist, Communist revolution" there was a considerable demonstration of sympathy for those who had assembled to see him off.**

**Trotsky's departure was to have been on Monday, but the authorities had been warned by Radek's farewell and wished to avoid any demonstration at Trotsky's. His departure on the Monday has been described in the newspapers of the world, by men who believed that they saw him walk through the crowd to the railway carriage. But he was not there. Some of these correspondents are so certain that they saw him that they even suggest that a dummy Trotsky was got up for the occasion. However that may be, on the Monday when he should have gone, and when his friends were expecting his departure, Trotsky, all ready to go, was informed of that he was not to start until Wednesday. The next day, Tuesday, agents of the G. P. U. came to him and told him that his train was to start in half an hour. He refused to go willingly and was removed from his room by force. It is said that he was put on the train a station outside Moscow. In any case none of his friends knew of his departure until he had gone.**

**MG. March 14, 1928.**

**An Inquiry In Russia. III.**

**Workers in Control.**

**The Intellectuals Elbowed Out.**

**Stalin and His Sheep.**

**The processes of a problem are always a good deal easier to follow if we are already acquainted with the solution to which they lead. The intricate party struggles of the last five years become much less puzzling when, ignoring all the theories and arguments put forward by both sides, we examine the results in terms not of ideas but of persons. Remembering the party leadership in the old heroic, Bohemian days of the Smolny Institute and comparing it was that of today, securely enthroned in the Kremlin, one tendency of the gradual changes that**

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have been brought about becomes manifest. The prevailing social character of the party leadership has changed. The power behind the Government of Russia, the ruling body of the Communist Party, is not what it was in the days of Lenin. If we make up our minds in what direction it is shifted we are already a long way towards an understanding of that social process in Russia which has been illustrated by and effected through the discussions in the party which have severally seemed so cloudy, so lacking in practical importance.

More than one revolution has been made by and in the name of "the workers." It has, however, been noticeable that the leaders of these revolutions, the men brought to the head of affairs by big social upheavals, have not, as a rule, been members of the class whose interest they have tried, sometimes honestly enough, to represent. In 1917 and for some years after, the majority of the men at the head of the Russian Revolution were professional revolutionaries, some of them very well-educated. Only a few of them were actual workers and peasants. They were all members of the party. Many of them were much more at home in the cafes of the Latin Quarter, in cheap lodgings by the lakes of Switzerland, in Utopian societies on the shores of the Mediterranean than in the factories and fields of Russia. They spoke for the peasants, but did not know right from wrong. I spoke for the workers, but would have been hard put to it to earn a living at the lathe. They were great talkers, and earned their places by their approved devotion to the cause of the men who put them there and by the devotion which they, articulate, were able to inspire. They spoke for the dumb, and were worshiped by those who could not yet speak for themselves. They had, most of them, been engaged for 20 years in theoretical debate, and looked it. Among them, of course, or exceptions, but at any big meeting of the Communist Party there was a marked difference of a social kind between the rank and the file in the body of the hall and the leaders gathered on the platform. Some of them tried to dress their parts, and leather jackets and, later, unpretentious uniforms were sort of protective coloring. The social difference between platform and hall is disappearing. Its disappearance was foreseen by the old professional revolutionaries, who, indeed, sincerely looked forward to a time when they should be replaced by men of the class to whose interest they had devoted their lives. At the same time they hardly

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**expected to be replaced so soon. It is one thing to look forward to handing over your business to your son, but quite another to find that same son elbowing you unceremoniously out of the way. It is a shuffle of this kind that is rather inadequately veiled by the long series of discussions in the party which has culminated in the ruthless suppression of the Opposition. King Lear has been shown the door.**

### **A Government of Workers and Peasants.**

**Gradually, year by year, the revolutionary intellectuals have been squeezed out of their seats and at the time of the final suppression of the Opposition the social character of the Central Committee of the party may be judged from the following facts. In the Political Bureau Bucharin was, I think, the only man with a university education. Molotov, like Bucharin, had come from the educated class. Of the remaining six Stalin was the son of a peasant shoemaker, expelled after a few stormy terms from a seminary where he had been put in the vain hope of making him a priest. Rykoff once a peasants son who had finished his ordinary schooling and been a pupil of Lenin's in Geneva. Voroshiloff had worked in a mine from the age of six. Kalinin had had some elementary schooling, after which, at the age of 18, he had gone into a cartridge factory and made a living as a turner. Rudzutak had been a shepherd from his 10th to his 15th year and had subsequently worked in a factory. Tomskey had been a factory worker from the age of 15. Of the deputy members Tchubar was a peasant, Mikoyan's father and brother were workmen, Kaganovitch was a leather worker, Petrovsky was a factory worker, Uglanoff was a peasant, and Andreieff had begun life as a pot – boy in a public house. Of the remaining 46 members of the Central Committee, 32 could claim that they were actual workmen, 11 metal workers, 2 leather workers, 2 moulder, 2 weavers, a gardener, a printer, a carpenter, 1 hatmaker, a chemist, a paper maker, a sailor, a blacksmith, an engineer, a bookbinder, a shipbuilder, a smelter, house painter, and two general laborers. This left 14 other members much of whom were intellectuals. They were Bubnoff, Manulaky, Krzhizhanovsky, Skvortzoff, Tsiurupa, Chicherin, Orakhelashviki, Sokolnikoff, Piatakoff, Smilga, Zinovieff, Kamaneff, Rakovsky, and Trotsky. Of these six were turned out and one had a narrow escape. Of the 32 blue blooded workmen none were turned out. The whole half-**

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**dozen of the Opposition, all old leaders ejected from the Central Committee and subsequently from the party, were taken from this little band of revolutionary intellectuals. Their descent from the summits of the party organization on which they were formerly grouped had been made easy by the gradual enlargement of the Central Committee until at last the non-- intellectual and genuinely working-class element was able to swamp them. It could not argue with them, but it was very well capable of howling them down and finally throwing them out.**

**"Irrelevant Nuisances."**

**But it is not merely an affair of the party leaders. Trotsky was preceded into exile and is being followed thither by a great number of his followers. What is true of the ruling body of the party is true of the party as a whole. The intellectuals are being elbowed out not only from the Kremlin but everywhere. Lenin always urged the drawing of the working class into the business of running the country, and there has been a good deal of conscious transplanting of workmen with the intention of bringing this about. But what has been done consciously is insignificant in comparison with the perfectly natural and seemingly inevitable transformation of the Communist Party into a huge bureaucracy in which the bulk of the bureaucrats are working men. This transformation has turned the intellectuals from indispensable leaders into being felt by the workingmen bureaucrats to be irrelevant nuisances. During the period of preparation for revolution there is plenty of time and energy to spare for thinking a great deal about theory and for debating this or that program which the debaters, at least at the moment, are not in a position to carry out. After a revolution is successful and the debaters have not only to agree upon a program but also to do their best to carry it out old habits persist for a time and changes of practical policy are heralded and prepared by elaborate argument and counterargument and personally conducted excursions for amateur statesmen into the most abstruse regions of philosophy.**

**But when when a revolution has lasted for 10 years, when the young debaters of 30 have turned into impatient man of 40, when the amateur statesmen have settled down, when a huge governing machine has been formed most of the units of which are simple minded, hard-working men,**

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**when for a number of years what has been needed has been neither brilliant speeches nor fine-spun theoretical debate but dull, intense labor, two things happen. The old revolutionary intellectuals yearn for more revolution, more romance, more crises, more debates, more, in fact, of the circumstances in which they are at their best; and the new men of the working class who have addressed themselves to piles of documents and the daily desk and are at last beginning to feel themselves competent desire no debates of any kind, look upon brilliance as a distracting glare, and find quite sufficient opportunity for intellectual effort in the office work to which they have learned to bend their unaccustomed minds. Every body of workingmen bureaucrats throughout the country was conscious of one or two local Communist intellectuals who would insist on discussion and were as bothersome as mosquitoes. Argumentative intellectuals found their way naturally into the Opposition. The party was glad of the chance of flinging them out.**

### **Stalin's Little Song.**

**There remains in a bureaucracy whose main interest is to get on with its work and to catch up with the arrears which inevitably accumulate while it was engaged in swatting the mosquitoes. It is a bureaucracy that is thankful to be spared the fatigue of argument. It is unanimous as the party has never been unanimous before. The theory that "Socialism is possible in a single country" allows it to go on with its work without losing the stimulus of a distant ideal. The theory may be right or it may be wrong, but, at all events, it is very acceptable and the working men bureaucrats are prepared to knock on the head anyone so tactless and so unkind as to attempt to deprive them of it. It is this that gives the point to one of the many little stories passed from mouth to mouth in Moscow by which the Oppositionists revenge themselves for their defeat and exhibit precisely that kind of intellectual pride which united their enemies against them. The story is that the members of the Politburo went on holiday. Some went fishing, some went shooting, each amused himself in his own way. Stalin went to the Caucasus, and lay on a mountainside watching a flock of sheep. He lay on the mountainside watching his sheep, and as he watched he sang. The words of his song were three and he signed them over and over again: "Socialism in a**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**single country. Socialism in a single country. Socialism in single country." Suddenly there was a tremendous clap of thunder and the heavens opened, and through the clouds appeared the enormous head of Karl Marx, with flaming eyes and tossing beard, and roared "idiot, what is that rubbish you are singing?" Stalin looked up at him and smiled, and said, "it does not matter what I'm singing I'm singing only to sheep."**

**The intellectuals who survived this workingman's purge of the party are very few. They include none of the great romantic figures of the Revolution. These are dead or scattered in exile by the development of the Revolution of which they were once the heroes. The few who remain are, for the most part, men did not take active part in debates, content to carry on their jobs, Red specialist as it were, such as Chicherin and Krzhizhanovsky. It is said by official spokesmen of the party that the Opposition were supported by the relics of the bourgeoisie because in them the bourgeoisie saw a lever that might be used to shake the Soviet Government. This may be partially true. But it is more likely to be true of the émigré.**

**MG. March 15, 1928.**

**An Inquiry In Russia. IV.**

**The Revolution's New Phase.**

**A Bureaucracy Of Working Men.**

**"Less Talk" the Slogan.**

**In these articles I have so far described the way in which the gradual elimination, culminating in something like a clean sweep, of the Revolutionary intelligentsia has been brought about. I have described the now overwhelming working-class majority in the ruling body of the party. I have now to describe a change of atmosphere, and consequently a change that is differently felt like people of different sorts. I very soon found in Moscow that in listening to everything that was said concerning this atmospheric change it was extremely important to remember who was saying it. It is only by changing resolutely to a sort of "class consciousness" that it is possible to give any but a misleading**

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**description of it. For example, I found the atmosphere "heavy." But I had to remind myself that I was a person who had expected a gradual spread of democracy within and at last beyond the confines of the Communist Party and was now contemplating a Communist Party in which centralism was decidedly stronger than it had ever been before. A workman Communist, on the other hand, found the atmosphere definitely "lighter" now that it was so much less clouded by contradictory and debatable theories. He seemed to breathe more freely because only one point of view was expressed. That very acquiescence in political monitoring which seem to me unhealthy seemed to him not to be acquiescence at all, but healthy confidence in someone who knows his own mind.**

### **A Czarist Parallel.**

**Once upon a time the Tsar Alexander II was assassinated and succeeded by the Tsar Alexander iii. That event was succeeded by the change of atmosphere precisely like that changed which is making itself felt in Russia today. Under Alexander II there had been a slight looseness in the adjustments of the Government machine; there had been signs of movement, a hopeful wobbling. Ideas had penetrated to the very center. The serfs had been liberated. No one knew what might happen. There was no wobbling under Alexander III. The wheels were locked. A heavy mass pressed everything into absolute immobility. Everybody knows of Trubetzky's marvelous statue of that Czar, which still stands in Leningrad less as a monument than as a criticism. An immense draught horse bears the firmly seated dull mass of a man, a thing of ruthless weight. The present regime in the Communist Party is like that – from the point of view of the revolutionary intelligentsia. Brilliance of any kind is under suspicion. Theory is neither here nor there. "I am and I sit light." Is the motto of the day.**

**But the oppressive weight of Alexander III was not felt by the landowners and mobility of the 80s because it expressed their own desires. They breathed more freely because wobbling had come to an end. That ponderous mass was not felt by the bureaucracy of those days because it was not their burden but their support, because it gave them that sense of stability, or permanence, which is the chief thing a**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**bureaucracy asks from the regime it represents and serves. And to imagine that because the small class of the revolutionary intelligentsia of 1928 feels itself opposed, slighted, and unhappy there is any such feeling in the class from which the new bureaucracy is drawn is completely to misunderstand what has happened in Russia. Just as the landowning class and the bureaucracy of the 80s breathed more freely for the stupendous presence of Alexander III, crushing every wriggle of the revolutionary and liberal intelligentsia of those days, so does the ruling class of 1928 feel relieved of much uncertainty by the emergence of a power similarly oppressive of something towards which it feels a similar instinctive hostility**

### **A Working – Class Alexander III.**

**If there is one thing that a bureaucracy likes to feel, it is firm ground under its feet. If there is one thing that gives a bureaucracy this pleasant, confident feeling of firm ground under its feet, is power, immobility, and ruthlessness in the central Government behind it. Anything tending to disturb bureaucratic equanimity by suggesting possibilities of imminent change is, in any settled State an enemy of the bureaucracy. We make the same mistake that was made by the Opposition leaders if we assume that because in the heroic period of the revolution they had played great parts they could count on any large measure of grateful popular support. They had, it is true, great names. Their suppression was accordingly satisfactory proof of the strength of the thing that suppressed them. After Lenin's, Trotsky's had been the greatest name in Russia; and behold that thing at the back of the bureaucracy was so strong that it could break him like a reed, give him a railway ticket and less than a month wages, and send him to a dismal little frontier town on the farther side of Turkestan. The thing that could do that to the one time omnipotent Trotsky was an Alexander III worth having. Nor was it an alien thing. It was a working class Alexander III, a figure of brawn and muscle, not too clever, built up of working-class bureaucrats, like the men who were proud to see it, without an effort, fling Trotsky into the darkness.**

**The downfall of the Opposition was not as it seemed to many people outside Russia a sign of the dissolution of the Communist Party but of**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**the precise opposite. It was a symptom of the party's increasing homogeneity, attained by replacing a few hundred intellectuals by a few thousand workingman. Why was Trotsky disliked? Because with increasing stability in the country he had become increasingly out of place in the government. His flighty brilliance was forgivable indeed is invaluable in the alarms and excursions of 1917, 1918, 1919, and 1920 the very frontiers of the Republic changed from day to day when crowns were tumbling, when the flames of revolution now here now there in war wracked Europe, when tremendous drama was being enacted, as it were, on the edge of the bottomless abyss. No man then dreamed of security, and Trotsky's faith and fire focused the desperate energies, the leaping aspirations of the time. In those days Radek side to a man who spoke of the days "when all this story will be ended." "Such stories as this end like 'Hamlet' with the deaths of everybody on the stage." In those days Trotsky said: "If we are driven out, we shall slam the doors behind us in a way to shake the world." In 1928 no one (outside the Opposition) is thinking slamming doors; no one even considers the possibility of a last act like that of "Hamlet." Everyone is a cog in the machine that is actually working. It may not be quite the machine that was originally planned. It may work with squeaks and groans and a lot of backfiring. But it works, and people do not want to be drawn into an excited discussion of the proper name for it, or of whether it would be better to blow it up by way of summoning health to make a better.**

### **The Workman Tired of Talk.**

**What, then, does that changed the atmosphere mean? What is it that we have now got in Russia? A revolution passed its first youth; a central authority heavy and dull as that of Alexander III, but bone of the bone and blood of the blood of the workingmen bureaucrats who made and serve it; reaction, in the sense that all dissentient voices are silenced, that's its price, from being the most amusing, has become the dullest in the world, that it's Parliamentarianism has become wholly official. The Revolution has lost alike it's Bohemianism and its intellectual high spirits. But we must ask ourselves, Who finds these things regrettable? If is not the working man who demands brilliant dialectics from his representatives, who asks from his newspapers the lively, elusive, school boyish antics of a college magazine, who relishes in his**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Government a touch of Bohemia and of the enfant terrible. The workingman does not miss these things at all. Talk was a luxury when it had been until recently forbidden, but 10 years of it have been quite enough to satisfy him. I remember about seven years old a Communist conference in small provincial town. Radek was defending some theses of the Central Committee and Larin was attacking them. A good many orators had had their say on both sides, when a shock headed workman came to the Tribune and made the shortest speech of the day. Lenin and Trotsky, he said, had shown them the way before, and would show them again. What was the good of all this talk? For himself, he proposed to close the discussion and vote for the theses of the Central Committee. That workman provoked a general smile, but he was a good deal ahead of his time. "Less talk" is the slogan of the workingman bureaucrat today. "More and better talk" is the slogan not of the workingman but of the intelligentsia. I had a wretchedly dull time in Moscow, but I had to remember that workingmen do not make a revolution with the object of amusing foreign visitors. In its new stage the Revolution is much more nearly a working-class revolution than it was before. It is also much more Russian, in spite of its Georgian leader, and will become more Russian still. The formula of "Socialism is a single country" frees the Revolution to be as Russian as it likes. That formula and a regime that can and will silence awkward theoretical sticklers make realism easier. The most significant remark I've heard in Moscow was this, said why a Stalinist Communist, "The trouble with the opposition noticed was that they would keep forgetting that they were in Russia. Abroad, they tell me, you can go shooting and keep your eyes for the birds, not troubling over much to look at the ground you are walking over. If you do that in Russia you soon find yourself up to the neck in a swamp. In Russia you must look at the ground."**

**MG. March 16, 1928.**

**An Inquiry In Russia. V.**

**Is There an Economic Crisis?**

**Approaching An Impasse.**

**Need for Change of Policy.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**Rykoff, speaking to the metalworkers, denied that Russia was passing through an economic crisis, and said that the symptoms which made some people talk of a crisis or difficulties of a temporary character that would be without serious result. If by a crisis one means a period of such difficulty as might shake the regime, I think he is right in saying no crisis exist. The difficulties at present to be felt in Russia are, however, such that they must compel some change of policy. The Revolution is not in danger, but it has reached a point at which, economically, it is approaching an impasse.**

**Let me briefly describe the difficulties that seem to me to make some change inevitable. Russia is actually producing more than she was producing before the war; if there is such a shortage of goods that the peasants are without much inducement to change there corn for money. Simultaneously, with a rise in the standard of life, with a higher level of demand from the workers, there is a shortage all sorts of farm produce. The State and cooperative shops lack goods on the one hand and milk, butter, and eggs on the other, which things are to be obtained at a high price from private dealers. Once more it has become necessary to use administrative measures enforcing the richer peasants to hand over their grain. Once more one hears of difficulties put in the way of private persons seeking to bring farm produce to the towns for sale. There is thus a puzzling state of affairs in which at one moment the observer is conscious that Russia is more prosperous than she was and at the next moment is reminded a little unpleasantly of the years of militant Communism.**

### **Contradictory Policies.**

**I am no economist and therefore put forward with some hesitation what I believe to be the explanation of this seeming paradox. It is that the Russian Government has been pursuing two policies which (in an extreme form) are mutually contradictory. The two policies could exist together so long as they were not pushed to extremes, but when in the desire to justify both of them at once, an effort is made to obtain immediate results from them the contradiction expresses itself in the difficulties I have just enumerated, and these difficulties can only be**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

brought to an end by a considerable reduction of zeal in pursuing one or other of these two policies or both. The first of these two policies is that of the hurried industrialization of Russia. The second is that of hurrying the elimination of private enterprise. It seems to me that, possibly because of their preoccupation with the Opposition, the Communist have been slow in noticing that hurry in the one policy forbids simultaneous hurry in the other.

The policy which is least likely to be much modified is that of the industrialization of Russia. This policy is the natural result of the change that has taken place in the Russian view of the non-Russian world. There was a time when it was believed that a revolution of the Russian type could not survive without an almost simultaneous revolution of the same type throughout the world. It was believed that without such a revolution the world would be unable to recover from the world war. So long as that view held the Russians could accept for their country the role of an agricultural province in the future European State in which the chief industrial provinces would be Germany and England. All that seemed necessary then was to hang on, a month or two, a year or two, until the spread of revolution should solve the economic problem of providing manufactured goods in exchange for Russian grain. But revolutionary development tarried and the Russian Revolution, left to itself, had to find a new formula to explain its continued existence and to encourage itself with the promise of a long life. The mere existence of the Revolution was clearly enough too valuable a piece of propaganda to be sacrificed for the doubtfully educational effect of some spectacular romantic suicides. A new formula had to be found, and it was found in the one time heretical belief that Socialism could be attained in a single country. After all, Russia covered a sixth of the land surface of the globe. It was big enough, even without allies, to serve as the laboratory for such an experiment.

**"Socialism in a Single Country."**

The formula of "Socialism in a single country" was not a formula to cover passivity. It dictated a very different economic program from that which would have served if, in a joint revolution, Russia was to be the agricultural partner of an industrial Germany, a program very much more

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**difficult to carry out. It meant that Russia must free herself as far as possible from the dependence on the factories of other countries. It meant that she must look forward to a time when her own factories would be sufficient to supply the needs of her population. It meant that she must cease to be an agricultural country the towns of which were chiefly important as distributing agencies for goods largely manufactured abroad. It meant that the chief plank in Russia's economic program must be the industrialization of Russia. This was desirable for other reasons besides being an essential condition of a self-contained Socialistic State. Enough of the old beliefs remain to persuade the Communist that the more successful they should be in building a Socialist system the more difficult it would be for non-Socialist States to refrain from attacking them. Seven years of more or less complete blockade had shown how important it would be in any future war that Russia should not be dependent on imports. That was one reason for acceptance of this difficult program. Another was that the dictatorship of the proletariat could hardly persist very long in a country where the proletariat was diminishing from year-to-year. Industrialization of Russia promised to strengthen the dictatorship by increasing the class on which it was based as well as by increasing its power of self defense against attacks from without.**

**This determination to industrialize Russia seems to me to be one of that twin keys to the puzzle of mixed success and failure which is presented by Russian industry today. It (and not State management of factories, etc.) is responsible for the shortages of this and that which persist in spite of increased industrial production. Industrial production increased for some years at an astonishing rate. It is still increasing though more slowly, because of the immediate effect on production of putting up a thousand pounds into repairing an existing factory is much greater than that of putting the same amount of money into the preparation of the site for a new one. Russia's industrial production is now said to be 100.9% of her prewar production. From the moment at which she had brought into action the means of production already in existence the apparent speed of her development was bound to become very much slower when measured in terms of output. Thus in the year 1925 – 6 production was 40.6% above the production of the previous year. The increase in the year 1926 – 7 was only 10.4%, and for this year of 1927-**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**8 it is estimated at 8%. This is natural enough. What is remarkable is that, or as of the total production in 1924-5 30.5% represented the percentage of means of production and 69.5 that of goods, the proportion of means of production goods in the total output is now 35.1 to 64.9. That is to say that the Russians are developing the manufacture of means of production faster than the manufacture of goods. (Different statisticians and different State departments vary in their estimate of these percentages but do not vary in their estimate of the tendencies which these percentages illustrate.) In the last three years the Russian Government has put three milliard roubles into the development of industry, and of this money 70% has gone into the development of heavy industry. Money that might be spent in buying manufactured goods or in the development of light industry to supply the immediate needs of the population goes regularly to the building of power stations, the development of oilfields, mines, and engineering works. They have a good deal to show for it. For example, the Russian railway system has increased by 17,000 km, and in the matter of electrification the number of power stations has increased in three years from 15 to 28, while the output of electrical energy has more than trebled. I even heard it said in Moscow that they were developing their means of production too fast because the lack of skilled technicians to make use of them.**

### **Inevitable Difficulties.**

**This is the explanation of a great many of those minor difficulties which seem to contradict the statement of increasing prosperity. On the one hand you have increased efficiency in the factories, higher productivity of labor, and instead of the 2,332,000 workmen employed in industry in 1924-5 you have 3,030,000 workmen employed in industry in 1927-8. On the other you have shortages of soap, boots, clothing materials, and other things wanted by those workmen and their families as well as by the rest of the population. "This," says Stalin, "is inevitable. For the very fact that we are developing the production of tools and means of production quicker than light industry.... In itself decides that we shall go on having elements of goods shortage for the next few years. But we cannot do otherwise if we wish to further as far as we can the industrialization of the country." There are naturally continual complaints and suggestions that it would be better to put the money**

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**into financing light industry. But the formula of "Socialism in a single country" commands the development of heavy industry, and Rykoff, in reply to such complaints, says: "In the history of the world's economy for many decades there has not been a country which has been able with its own resources, without outside help, without big long term foreign loans, to establish and develop heavy industry. We are without these loans. Therefore we can solve this problem only if for some years we deny ourselves the satisfaction of certain other demands." Russia is in the position of a man with a small business who, instead of enjoying profits, stints himself, does without new clothes, and lives poorly in a single room because he has set his heart on building a new wing to his factory. To complete the picture it should be said that he has a large family shrilly demanding that the profits should be spent at once and for their immediate benefit.**

**But the problem is not quite so simple as that, because of the character of the main source from which the money comes that is not invested in industrial development. Russia cannot buy machinery abroad without selling something. For something to sell she depends mainly on the peasants. The peasants, unlike the workmen, do not feel themselves interested in the slightest degree in the establishment of "Socialism in a single country." They do not grow corn as a hobby, but in order to sell it and buy goods. If the goods are not there they will not think it worth their while to grow the corn. There is consequently a continual tug-of-war between the team of Communist pulling on behalf of heavy industry and the team of peasants, whose lack of organization is made up for by their weight, pulling in the opposite direction. The Communist, looking ahead to a time when, thanks to the industrialization of Russia, State industry will be able to supply all needs, are clearly resigned to being unable to supply all at present. That is to say that they are resigned to the persistence of those circumstances in which it is idle to hope for the rapid elimination of private enterprise.**

**That, it seems to me, is the deduction which they will now be compelled to make unless they intend to content themselves with less rapid progress and to put less into the development of things to bear fruit in the future and more into the provision of things for the present. They can relieve their difficulties at once by slackening the tempo of**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**industrialization and spending more money on the satisfaction of immediate needs and less on "capital development." They can relieve their difficulties by spending money that would otherwise go into machinery on buying manufactured goods abroad. They seem to me to be in no danger, because they are capable of bending a very long way before even thinking of the possibility of a break. If, however, they refused to sacrifice the tempo of industrialization they will have to make it easier, and not more difficult, for private enterprise to help out that of the State, exactly as in similar circumstances, differently caused, Lenin appealed to private enterprise when he brought in the new economic policy.**

**MG. March 17, 1928.**

**An Inquiry In Russia. VI.**

**The State and Private Enterprise.**

**Retreat From The "Nep."**

**Lines of Future Development.**

**In almost all discussions of the contest between State and private enterprise in Russia it is forgotten that the enormous majority of the population of the country is engaged in the one industry in which private enterprise scarcely feels the presence of a competitor. 98% of Russian agriculture is in private hands. In spite of all the help that is given to every effort in collective agricultural production the output of collective agricultural enterprise is only 2% of the whole. It is so small that at present it can almost be disregarded. The struggle between State and private enterprise is limited to the battlefields of non-agricultural industry and trade. In these battlefields State holds two commanding heights of industrial production and foreign trade. The large factories, the railways, the mines, the oil fields together with an affiliated network of agencies for buying and selling, may be considered as a big trust, the directors of which do not personally enrich themselves to any remarkable extent. This trust has been able to count on being grossly**

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**favored by the State in its competition with private enterprise. With State help it has been doing the best to push private enterprise out of business. According to the figures obtainable it has succeeded very well. Thus, taking figures laid before the last Communist Party Congress, figures intended not for foreign consumption but as data for the formation of plans by the Communist themselves, we find that the percentage of industrial production in private hands has fallen from 19% in the year 1924-5 to 14% in 1926-7. It is believed to have fallen this year to 13%. In wholesale trade 21.8% was in private hands in 1923-4 and only 9% in 1926-7. In retail trade private enterprise has a larger share, but even there it has fallen from 58.6% to 35.4%. If we judge by these figures alone it would seem that private enterprise in Russia is fast disappearing, although the policy of industrialization produces circumstances in which its continued existence is both inevitable and desirable.**

**We have to remember, however, that those figures are concerned only with legitimate private enterprise, with those activities of private enterprise which are within the law and not carefully hidden from the statisticians. We have also to remember that the Communist are anxious that the figures for Socialistic enterprise should be as high as possible, and the figures for private enterprise as small as possible, and that so are the private capitalists. The Communist are anxious to show that they are proceeding rapidly towards the establishment of Socialism, and the private persons engaged in competing with State enterprise are anxious to attract as little attention as possible. Such bias as there may be in the compiling of these figures is on the same side whether it comes from the Communist or from his private competitor. The greater the pressure on private enterprise the less is it possible to rely for a picture of what is happening on the statistics of such operations as are open and above board. The greater the pressure the more does private enterprise turn from operations in public view to operations that are possible only so long as they are not discovered and, consequently, do not appear in accessible balance sheets.**

### **The Leninist Policy.**

**It was not the intention of Lenin, in introducing the New Economic**

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**Policy, to drive private enterprise underground. His intention was precisely the opposite, to deprive it of the huge rewards of illicit dealing, to bring it into the open, to compete with it in the open, in the hope that eventually it would die a natural death. It was, on the part of Lenin, a definite choice of economic instead of administrative measures. NEP was considered by him in the light of a poultice to bring the evil to the surface, because it had been found that to drive it underground was the poison and paralyze the whole system. The Oppositionists, who have always been rather scared of the visible burgeoning of private enterprise under this treatment, must bear a share of the responsibility for what has, unintentionally, I think, been in reality a retreat from the principles of the New Economic Policy as Lenin lay them down. Their criticisms have bothered the party into being impatient and anxious to prove too soon that the New Economic Policy could be justified by the rapid extinction of private enterprise. Private enterprise has been once more driven underground. It has at the same time received tremendous stimulus from the policy of the industrialization of Russia which is a corollary of the formula "Socialism in a single country." My last article showed how the pursuit of this policy (the realization of which will ultimately help the State as against private enterprise) results in the meantime in goods famines, to the recurrence of which the authorities seem to be resigned. Now the effect of a goods famine is not merely that a certain number of people have to do without the goods. It ensures huge profits for persons who succeed in evading what is for practical purposes a form of internal blockade. If we consider the State industrial and trading system as a rather leaky system it is clear that a policy that temporarily brings about a shortage is a policy that temporarily increases the relative pressure on the fluid in the cistern, so that it gushes out of leaks or might otherwise only trickle.**

**The following is a Communist statement of the relations between State and private industry and trade: – "State industry gives almost the whole of its production to the Cooperatives and to its retail shops, and there remains for the private traders only a small percentage of the total mass of goods. He operates chiefly with the products of home industries and only with those products of State industry which he succeeds in buying illegally at second and third hand." That seems to me a fair description**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**of the system. Now let me give a couple of examples of the manner in which it leaks. Both examples are taken from a single copy of the "Izvestia."**

### **Two "Private Enterprises."**

**A certain Funck, needing for his private factory some fine turpentine and a wax imported from abroad, organized two sham "artels" (a form of cooperative society in which a number of workers combine to accept responsibility for each of their number). These "artels," get up for Mr. Funck's benefit by a money changer and another old friend, received as if for themselves the turpentine and the wax, and promptly handed them over to Mr. Funck. Here you have a private person competing with the State buying goods from the State at the specially low terms intended to make it possible for Cooperatives to compete with him.**

**Two businessmen of Moscow, Morganstern and Roninson, got up an artel in Kostroma, which called itself a "Cent-Trud" (Central Labor), and announced that its object was the working up of celluloid. Observe the dates of its subsequent operations. On October 20 it asked the All Union Industrial Cooperatives for 1300 kg of imported celluloid. On October 21 the chief of the import and export department decided to let them have 1000 kg, if the Kostroma industrial union has no objection. On the same day the question was put to the latter by telegram. On October 22 an answer was received to the effect that there was no objection, or whereupon 1097 kg of imported celluloid were issued at a privileged price to Morganstern as agent for this "Central - Labor" artel in Kostroma. Morganstern sold it to other private persons in Moscow. None of it ever went to Kostroma, and the artel "Central - Labor," having served its purpose, was promptly liquidated. I should think it extremely improbable that Mr. Morganstern's activities are properly taken into account in weighing the developments of private and collective enterprise. In the statistics of the year both these little affairs (if they had not been exposed, and possibly even in spite of having been exposed) would naturally go under the head of "Cooperation."**

**Mr. Morganstern and Mr. Funck were found out, but it is obvious that**

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**only a small proportion of such tricks are discovered. The speed with which Mr. Morgenstern's little deal was put through would be a magnificent testimonial to the efficiency of the Cooperative institution that supplied the celluloid, if it was not well known that such speed is most unusual. It is more likely to testify to the zeal of his friends. The frequency with which such cases occur should really be a sufficient warning to the Communist not to place too much in statistics that refer only to legitimate business activities. The two sets of figures, the one showing rapid progress in industrialization and the other showing rapid elimination of private enterprise, seem to me to be incompatible and unless (1) the process of rapid industrialization is not accompanied by shortages (which is not claimed) or (2) the figures seeming to show the elimination of private enterprise really illustrate only the extent to which private enterprise has been driven to abandon useful activities performed in public and to take up in place of them activities which are secret, parasitic, and harmful.**

**It is not that there is any reason to doubt that Russia is developing economically on a system which in important respects differs from that which obtains elsewhere. It is that the Communists have been in so much of a hurry to show proof of this that they have allowed themselves to buy statistical triumphs and to pay for them in real values a good deal more than they are worth. In their anxiety to prove the validity of their formula "Socialism in a single country," and incidentally to increase Russia's power of resisting attack, they are putting so much into industrialization that, as they frankly admit, they expect for some time to have to put up with various shortages. No doubt, in the long run, the industrialization of Russia may bring about a greater increase in production than could have been attained without the sacrifices. But in the meantime it is contributing to perpetuate a state of affairs particularly favorable to what may be described as the guerrilla warfare of private enterprise against the regular troops of State and cooperative enterprise. To refuse to recognize this, to press simultaneously towards the elimination of private enterprise and towards the industrialization that they eventually eliminate, but must in the meantime increase its rewards, is to reproduce under the New Economic Policy some of the very conditions which the policy was designed to alleviate. Here and there in Moscow I thought I could detect signs of growing recognition**

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**that this burning of the candle at both ends was a mistake. There is now no Opposition to frighten common sense by tying a tin can labeled "Thermidor" to its tail, and I am inclined to expect not an abandonment of ultimate aims but a tendency to be less anxious for statistical proofs of rapid progress in the realization of all aims at once. There are those who talk of a "Neo-Nep," not so much a development as a confirmation of the New Economic Policy. They can recover much real ground by sacrificing some paper successes.**

**MG. March 19, 1928, VII.**

### **An Inquiry In Russia.**

#### **Concessions.**

#### **English And US Capital.**

#### **Anglo – Soviet Rupture.**

**Shortly before leaving Moscow I talked with Ksandroff, the head of the Concessions Committee, in the office which, when I was last in Russia, had been occupied by Trotsky. As most of the questions I wished to ask needed statistical replies, I put them in writing and received in writing the answers which are translated below.**

**Question. – What is the total amount of foreign capital at present invested in the exploitation of concessions in Russia?**

**Answer. – The total sum invested up to October 1, 1927, amounts to more than 52 million rubles, and is distributed among the following branches of industry: –**

#### **Roubles.**

**Mining industry..... 24,215,000**

**Manufacturing..... 18,780,000**

**Timber..... 2,318,000**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**Trade..... 2,211,000**  
**Agricultural.....3,014,000**  
**Transport.....700,000**  
**Building.....774,000**

**The English concession of the Lena Goldfields is that with the largest amount of invested capital.**

**Question. – How much of the total sum invested in concessions is English, and how much American?**

**Answer. – The English share is about 15 million roubles (28% of the total invested capital), the American share is 12 1/4 million rouble (23.5%). The production of concessional undertakings realized on the internal market in 1926-27 amounted to about 80 million roubles. Turnover of the export and import operations of the trading companies in the same period amounted to between 42 and 45 million roubles. The export operations of the two largest concessions expressed in value amounted to 25 million roubles for the Lena Goldfields and 14 millions for the Harriman concession.**

**Question. – Is Soviet Government satisfied with the manner in which the concessions are being carried on, the Lena Goldfields for example?**

**The Lena Goldfields.**

**Answer. – The work of every concession satisfies the Soviet Government in so far as the concessionaire observes the conditions of this agreement. In particular, with regard to the Lena Goldfields, one must observe that the Lena Goldfields Company has addressed itself seriously to the fulfillment of the tasks set by the concessional agreement. The state of affairs on the concession, which must be considered fully satisfactory, bears witness to this. The undertakings are supplied with all material and equipment necessary for carrying on the work without interruption. Besides the reorganization of existing works, the company is successfully carrying out the building of new. The powerful dredge, which the concessionaire is bound by agreement to set up not later than the fourth year of his concession, is being set up in the district already in the second year. In carrying out his obligations with regard to the Ural concessions, the concessionaire is finishing in the summer of this year the first part of the building of a**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**copper – smelting works.**

**The productivity of the other Ural works corresponds to the obligations laid on the concessionaire by the concessional agreement. At this new works, for the first time in the USSR will be used for method of selective floating of copper – iron pyrites. The minimum capacity of the works will be 3000 poods of ore a day.**

**Question. – What have been the chief difficulties which have caused the annulment of certain concessions by the concessionaire or by the Government?**

**Answer. – The chief reason for the annulment of concessional treaties has been the financial weakness of the concessionaire's who have not been able to provide their undertaking with a financial base sufficiently solid to correspond to the scale of the undertakings. Certain concessionaires brought in the minimum equipment but did not supply their undertakings with working means. Sometimes the concessionaire was not only without reserve capital, but lacked even the capital necessary for making a start. Naturally in such conditions the concessionaire was unable to carry out the obligations he had undertaken, and this led to the annulment of the agreement.**

**Failure of Agricultural Concessions.**

**The reason for the failure of agricultural concessions is insufficiency of the capital investment, absence of mechanization and primitive methods of working which were little different from those of the neighboring peasants.**

**In the concessions of Krupp and Drusag the Soviet Government took into consideration the concessionaire statements of local conditions and also the poor harvest resulting from the droughts of the first years of the concessions, went to meet the needs of the concessionaire and revise the agreements that had been concluded. On the Krupp concession, for example, not the whole area turned out to be suitable for corn growing. According to the agreement first concluded, the basic branch of the undertaking was to be sheep farming. On the Drusag concession, according to the desire of the concessionaire, the area to**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**be sown was reduced. He was further given a series of other privileges.**

**Another reason for the annulment of agreements is insufficient acquaintance of the concessionaire with the object of the concession, the conditions of work, etc. which results in commercial miscalculation and, as a result, a similar non-fulfillment of the conditions of the agreement and its annulment. Finally, certain small concessions were liquidated by the Government on account of the bad faith of the concessionaire and the intentional nonfulfillment of the agreement.**

**To those cases where the failure of the concession has been the result of objective reasons – a change in the state of the world market or some natural misfortune – the Soviet Government has always gone to meet the needs of the concessionaire, reconsidered the treaty, and lightened the conditions which the concessionaire found burdensome. In this way, besides those mentioned above, the agreement with Harriman was reconsidered and experience in the working of the concessional undertaking was taken into account.**

**The Rupture with England.**

**Question. – Have the English concessions suffered in any degree from the rupture of relations with England, or does the Soviet Government regard them as agreements made with individual persons which should not depend on the relations existing between the Soviet Government and the Government of the country of which the concessionaire is a subject?**

**Answer. – The Anglo – Soviet rupture has not affected the attitude of the Soviet Government towards the English concessions working in the USSR. The Soviet Government, as is well known, guarantees the concessionaire against one-sided change of the conditions of the concessional agreement without the agreement of both parties. On the basis of existing practice, we may say that there has not been a case of normal business relations between the Soviet Government and the concessionaire being broken as a result of political complications with the country of which the concessionaire is a citizen.**

**Question. – I should like, if possible, a list of the concessions working**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**at the present moment.**

**Answer. – On 1 January 1928, 95 concessional agreements were in force in the USSR. In point of number England holds the 3rd place., America the second, and Germany the first. This table shows how the concessions are distributed among the different countries: –**

<b>Germany.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>America.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>England.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Japan.....</b>	<b>.7</b>
<b>Sweden.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Austria.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>France.....</b>	<b>.5</b>
<b>Poland,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Norway,,,,,,,,,</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Finland.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Denmark.....</b>	<b>.2</b>
<b>international.....,</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Holland.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Italy.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Latvia.....,</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Lithuania.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Czechoslovakia.....</b>	<b>1</b>

**The biggest concessional undertakings are in mining. Here we have in the first place the big metallurgical industrial combined enterprise of the Lena Goldfields Company. I have spoken already of the work of this concession.**

### **The Harriman Concession.**

**The second biggest concessional undertaking in the USSR is that of the American firm W. A. Harriman, which since the end of 1925 has been exploring the Chiatura manganese beds. During this time the firm has succeeded in considerably developing the undertaking, which at the present moment employs more than 3000 persons. The annual production of this Chiatura enterprise is as high as 15 million rouble (the value of last year's production of the Lena Goldfields exceeded 17 million roubles). The Chiatura concession is an export concession, and**

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**in this lies special interests. During the last year this undertaking has done extensive building on a large scale.**

**The English mining undertaking Tetinkhe, near the Gulf of that name on the Pacific Coast, deserves interest. This undertaking is working poly metallic ores. At the end of the past operating year the number of workmen engaged was over 1000. In productive value this undertaking is considerably less than the bigger mining concessions, but as new equipment is set up the quantity of metal obtained in the concession will undoubtedly increase considerably.**

**Of the concessions in the metal industry most attention is deserved by the undertaking of the Swedish firm Sharikopodshipnik. It has existed since 1923, and during this time the concessionaire has put into the undertaking about 3 million rouble of his own. About 650 persons are employed in the undertaking and the value of its output during the last operating year was no less than 2 1/2 million roubles. The things manufactured by the concession are of great significance in public economy.**

**The biggest electro – technical undertaking of Sweden, Asea, in virtue of an agreement confirmed in 1927, has received the right to build and exploit an electro – technical factory in Jaroslavl with the object of making standard machines for alternating current from 3 hp to 700 hp and accessories for such machines. The buildings formally belonging to the Russian joint stock company Asea and standing on the territory of the concession are handed over to the concessionaire. The concessionaire is bound to begin not later than in three months time the building of a factory and to equip undertakings to ensure the carrying out of an established progressive productive program, on the understanding that before October 1, 1934, the production of the undertaking should not exceed 5000 tons. The concession is for 35 years. With regard to taxes, rates, railway tariffs, and transport privileges this concessionaire is put on level terms with State "self paying" undertakings of the same kind.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

**MG. March 20, 1928.**

### **An Inquiry In Russia. VIII.**

#### **Foreign Policy.**

#### **Soviet And Third International.**

#### **Lost Prestige in the East.**

**The international position of Russia is suffering at the moment as the result of two heavy defeats inflicted on the, Commissariat of Foreign Affairs by the Third International. In England the activities of the International gave the Conservative Government an excuse to undo nearly all that has been done in diplomatic bridge building between Soviet Russia and anti— Soviet England. It is true that here not much of an excuse was needed, but, such as it was, the Third International supplied it. In China the Third International has brought about a devastating blow not only to Russia's immediate prestige in that country, but to her influence throughout the East. Year by year, with infinite patience, the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs has built up for Russia a position of greater influence among the Eastern nations than she had ever had before. Of all European nations Russia alone seemed to be the friend of the "the awakening East." Here and there activities of the Third International cost Russia some of the confidence she had inspired in Nationalist movements, but for the most part the will of the, Commissariat prevailed. All the Nationalist movements of the East looked upon Russia almost as an ally. Little more than a year ago to be a Soviet citizen in all territory controlled by the Chinese Nationalist was to find all doors open and to be greeted with friendship while men of other nations were greeted with suspicion. Now, to be a Soviet Russian in China is to be a little better than an outlaw. Russian Consulates have been sacked, officials murdered, diplomatic guarantees violated, and today the only official Russian representation in China is not that which persists on sufferance in the territory controlled by Chang Tso-lin. The collapse of Russian prestige among Chinese Nationalist lowers Russian prestige not only in China but in every other Eastern country. Russian**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**influence in the East is today only a shadow of what it was a year or two ago.**

**International Too Strong for Commissariat.**

**The Commissariat has been steadily pursuing sound Russian policy, first defined by Lenin, which consists in supporting Nationalist movements in all "colonial and half colonial" countries without attempting to make such movements Communist. The International, on the other hand, has been pursuing a policy of pushing Communism everywhere and of provoking class warfare even in countries, such as China, which are actively engaged in the attempt to realize a Nationalist program. In Turkey, fortunately for Russia, the International failed to break the Turkish national front and so failed to turn Nationalist Turkey into an enemy of Russia. It did its best, but failed. In China it succeeded, with natural result. In China there were Russians who did their best to carry out Leninist Russian policy. There were representatives of the Third National, the most active not Russians, who urged the Chinese Communist to follow a policy which could have no other end than and the dividing of the Nationalist movement against itself before it was strong enough to split without collapsing.**

**These examples, particularly that of China, where we have the spectacle of the Third International bringing to the ground the whole edifice of Russian prestige in the East, provide an excellent opportunity for examining the relations between the Soviet Government and the International Association which is usually held to be identical with it. Their true relation is that of cousins. There is blood in the one that is not in the other. The Russian Communist Party controls both the Soviet Government and the delegates whom it sends to the Third International, but in the International those delegates are mixed with delegates from other nations. The Communist in the Soviet Government put their carryout as well as they can policy that is thought best for Russia. The Communist sent to the International are put there carry out the policy that is the best for the spread of Communism. The two bunches of Communist are precisely in the position of two State trusts, both responsible to the party, but each concerned with its own interests, which may or may not conflict with those of the other. Take what is,**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1920.**

perhaps, an even better example, Tomsy and the director of a State Industrial Trust are both Communist, but when they meet over a wages dispute the director will do his best to keep down costs and Tomsy will do his best to keep up the wages of his trade unionists.

The Russian party certainly has a predominating influence in the Third International. But it would be wrong to suppose that the presence in the International of a number of other parties does not gravely affect the general policy. The presence of a number of parties tends to make the general policy more adventurous than the policy of each individual party would be were it left to itself. Communist in every country except Russia are profoundly conscious that a revolution in their own country would be a great deal easier if there had already been a revolution next door. The German would like to be encouraged by the spectacle of a revolution in France. The Frenchman thinks that a revolution in Berlin is the first step towards a revolution in Paris. They are all prepared to vote for risks to be taken by each other. The Indian Communist, convinced that a Communist revolution in India is at present out of the question, thinks that it would be brought much nearer if there were a Soviet Government in China. He is consequently prepared to urge actions which end in many thousands of Chinese Communist losing their heads. The International always be considerably wilder than the several parties of which it is composed. That is to say that the International will be wilder than the Soviet Government. Most of its members have nothing to lose. The Russians have a revolution not to make but to defend.

### **Taming the International.**

In view of all this it is interesting to observe how, at the moment, the Russian party is using its predominating influence. It is using it to tame the International. I can hardly suppose that it is doing this consciously or on purpose, but instinctive actions are often more significant than those that are the result of a process of reasoning. The Russian party is demanding from all sections of the Third International action parallel with its own in treatment of sympathizers with the opposition. This disregards the essential difference between a party in power and a party still far from having obtained power. The scarcely adolescent parties of the Continent and of America are being sieved as if they were already

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**in the position of the Russian party. Now, after 10 years of power in Russia, the Russian party can perhaps afford to discard its romantically minded intellectuals. But if it had done this in 1917 it would have lost very nearly all of Lenin's adjutants. It would have been without Krestinsky, Kursky, Trotsky, Kamanneff, and Zinovieff. The non-Russian parties are being weakened intellectually precisely in the present when one would imagine they need all the brains they can get. But in considering the general purge prescribed by the Russian party it is worthwhile to remember wherein in their conception of the state of the world the oppositionists differ from the victorious majority. Trotsky and his friends believe that the state of the world is such as to justify an adventurous policy on the part of the International. The majority believe that it does not. Trotsky believing that Socialism is impossible in a single country, considers that the choice before the Communist is to bring about a world revolution or to become in fact if not in name a bourgeois Government, precisely as the French revolutionary Government lost its character while preserving the slogans. He thinks it better for the revolution to collapse in flames than to survive as a façade hiding an inevitable evolution towards the right. He thinks the world revolution is near and worth hoping for at once. The majority are not so optimistic. Consequently the elimination of the opposition from all the foreign Communist parties is bound to have a decidedly taming effect on the institution in which these parties are represented.**

### **The War Scare.**

**Last year the Commissariat was weakened and the Third International temporarily strengthened by Sir William Joynson-Hicks. The Russian Communist are realists after their fashion, and they are inclined to attribute a similar realism to their opponents. They consequently could not believe that England would strike a blow at her own trade and shake what they consider the jerry-built peace of Europe as a sort of irresponsible lark. They imagined that England needed all the trade she could get and would not throw away even a little of it for nothing. They imagine this was quite enough to prevent England doing anything which should increase uncertainty in international relations unless she hoped to justify herself by doing a great deal more. They were consequently convinced that the rupture of relations with Russia was the prelude to**

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**war, in which case Russian hopes would automatically be shifted from the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs to the Third International.**

**This belief has not wholly died away. The Russians talk with evident disquiet of English preparations, roadbuilding, etc., on the Afghan frontier. They asked pointedly against whom is Poland arming. They see in the Polish – Lithuanian conflict an actual danger to themselves. They point out that if Poland succeeds in getting control of Lithuania the Poles will be better able to aim their first blow at Moscow instead of at Kieff. They do not want war, and meet the threat of it with an offer of disarmament which is perfectly sincere. Disarmament would be of the utmost value to them allowing them to divert to economic construction money goes at present into preparation to resist the attack that they are convinced will be made upon them.**

**They are, however, beginning to think that this attack is not so imminent as they had been led to suppose by Sir William Joynson-Hicks, and as they grow more certain that they can count on a prolonged period of peace so the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs gathers prestige among them, while the Third International will tend more and more to exchange in their minds its practical for an academic significance. It will not be abandoned. It cannot be abandoned, because the dull, hard, bureaucratic work which is now the lot of the Russian Communist would be intolerable without some kind of external inspiration. One method of propelling a donkey is to suspend a carrot before his nose. He may never attain the carrot, but the sight is dangling between him helps him to pull his card. The idea of world revolution, ever to be but not actually attained, may serve as the carrot suspended before the patient nose of the Communist Party now harnessed to a very heavy cart and doing his best to pull it along the worst roads in the world.**

## **DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924**

**MG. March 22, 1928.**

**An Inquiry In Russia. IX.**

**The Peasants Under Communism.**

**Taxing The Rich Farmers.**

**Agriculture and the Workers.**

**Russian statistics of all kinds resemble the works of Lenin in that at different times by different Communist they are used to justify diametrically opposite conclusions. Statistics that purport to illustrate the social and economic development of the peasants are particularly untrustworthy, because the Communist classification of the peasants vary from year to year and because the peasants have both the motive and the ingenuity to elude even the most painstaking to classify them. What, for example, is one to make of the statement that over a large area of European Russia no household tilling more than 23 desyatins of land hires men or horses, whereas nearly 40% of the households with a single desyatin of land are employers of labor and hirers of horses? In Russia it is better not to be an employer of labor wherefore this slur is put upon the poor man, who was made to employ the rich man for whom he works. The rankings of large areas of other people's land is also nothing to be proud of. The rich peasant therefore contrives to evade this, while gathering the profits, or hiring out himself and his agricultural implements, horses, etc., to assist the poor man to cultivate his land in return for satisfactory wage in the shape of the bulk of the crop. He succeeds in partially camouflaging his real position and in queering the view of any investigator. This is only one of his tracks. He has hundreds. Like the Lincolnshire poachers, he can "slip out anywhere." The only safe line to take in approaching statistics concerning the peasants is to assume that they are wrong, and to be too sure whether they err by exaggeration or the reverse.**

**The Village Under the "Nep."**

**I shall therefore not take the risk of quoting any of the large number of**

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**the tables which divide the present population into percentages of poor peasants, middle peasants, and rich tight-fistsD. it is probably much less misleading to leave these mathematical heights to more daring climbers and to remain in the misty but safer plane of general statement. Here, without going into figures, one can say that the village emerged with the New Economic Policy from the period of leveling that preceded it. The big three revolution landowners have gone. There are no large estates in private hands. But there are clear signs of the appearance of a new class with some of the characteristics of the old landowners. In some districts these rich peasants are known as "the new Squires." They build houses distinguished from the ordinary peasants houses outwardly by the size of the windows, and within by the possessions of a piano or a gramophone and superior furniture. The wealth of these households is not expressed in terms of land but in terms of the means of cultivation – agricultural machines and draught animals – which enable them to lay their poorer neighbors under contribution. Next in the social scale to these new village gentry are the middle peasants, of whom there are generally supposed to be about three times as many as before the war. The dividing line between these two classes is very dimly traced and quite unstable. According to where you draw that line you belong to the Opposition or to the majority, the Opposition counting many well-to-do peasants as tight-fists whom the more complacent majority are willing to count as worthy members of the favored second class. Below these again are the poor peasants, increasing in number but not get anything like so numerous as they were before the revolution. Socialism can hardly be said to have touched Russian agriculture. Of the total agricultural output I think that no one claims that more than 2% is contributed by collective organizations. For the agricultural output, on which depends the prosperity of town & country alike and the very possibility of carrying out the Communist ambitious program, they have to depend on this highly individualistic village society**

**I am inclined to think that both Opposition and majority Communist exaggerate the extent to which they can choose in deciding their policy in dealing with the society at any particular moment. They must have corn and raw material, and their policy at any given moment is simply that which promises to keep up the supply of these things in the**

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**immediate future. They have never been able to lay down an agricultural policy comparable in its far sightedness with their policy of industrialization. Nor do they feel the need of such a policy (except when engaged in controversy on the subject with each other), because they are persuaded that success in industrializing Russia will put it in their power to order the development of the village as they please. They believe that if they were in a position to satisfy all the demands of the peasants for manufactured goods, for tractors, etc., they would be able to ensure that the village should develop towards collectivism instead of towards capitalism. In this way they feel that their policy of industrializing Russia is not only an industrial but also an agricultural policy. Industrialization comes first. Unless they can bring that off they can bring nothing off, so that in the meantime they are more concerned with increasing Russia's agricultural output than with the social and economic system under which that output is made. Their immediate agricultural policy is therefore still one of hand to mouth, as it has been since the first days of the revolution.**

### **Goods Shortage.**

**Though industrialization promises ultimately plenty, it implies present shortage of manufactured goods. There is shortage of clothes, of boots, of tools. The last shortage of which I saw a complaint was a shortage of wedding chests, some ingenious private traders having made a corner in them "just at the height of the village wedding season." This sort of thing unites the peasants in discontent. Now, unity among the peasants, except in satisfaction (which at present is hardly to be hoped for), is the thing of which the Communist have most reason to be afraid, because it increases the power of influence possessed by their worst enemy. In any agricultural community under normal conditions the man whose word is listened to is the best farmer. He proves he is the best farmer by doing better than the others. Wisdom in the village is judged by corn bands and fat beasts, evidences difficult to shake. The instincts of the peasants are extraordinarily homogeneous. They are all inclined to feel the same way at the same time. When all are discontented and when, for one reason or another, the Communist have exasperated the rich peasants to the point of active hostility, to the point of threatening to sow less corn, they have got to split village**

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**unanimity at all cost to prevent the rich peasants from drawing the whole village after them in general sabotage.**

**That is the situation at the moment. As I explained in telegrams from Moscow, a number of reasons combined to make the richer peasants unwilling to sell them grain. The grain had to be collected, time was moving on, and the Communist had to use administrative measures. A number of rich peasants were arrested for crimes which, in the eyes even of middle peasants, are not crimes at all. For example, a citizen whose deplorable character was sufficiently proved by his possession of 26 desyatins under corn, 14 cows, five horses, and a flock of 50 sheep was put in prison for having 3000 poods of corn while you had not sold a single bushel to the State or to the cooperatives. Hundreds of such criminals were brought before the courts, with the result that the rich peasants feel they have been tricked, militant Communism is back again, and that the village must resist by sowing less corn. At all cost of the Communist must split the village last it should follow its natural leaders in reducing the area sown.**

### **Stimulating Collective Farming.**

**Accordingly it is announced that while the total agricultural tax is to be increased the middle peasants are to pay less, while 35% of the poor are to be exempted, so that rather more than the whole burden of the increase in the tax will fall upon the rich. At the same time 715 million roubles are assigned to be spent in seeds, implements, etc., to serve as a stimulus for sowing by the other classes. A tremendous effort is to be made to stimulate collective farming, described by Kalinin as "the surest way to the improvement of agriculture." Groups formed for this purpose will undoubtedly have first call on the seeds, machines, and beasts to be paid for out of the grant. There have been in different parts of Russia plenty of cases of success where a number of peasants have been united for the use of tractors and other agricultural machinery which individually they would not have been able to afford. But the attempt to hurry this development artificially has hitherto brought its own punishment. A careful investigation of existing collective agricultural societies gave disquieting results. Out of 6956 such societies examined 1717 proved to be shams. In Moscow Government**

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**as many as 35% of those investigated proved to be frauds that had enabled cunning persons to get hold of credits and other privileges intended to encourage those who were supposed to be setting bravely out on Lenin's road to agricultural socialism. But even if a large proportion of the new societies that will spring up are shams, there mere appearance will have an effect in dividing the village against itself and giving poor peasants an inducement to sow and at least a temporary promise of not being dependent on the rich. For the moment all that matters is to prevent the hostility of the rich peasants from being reflected in a general reduction of the area sown. Once the seed is in the ground the main danger is avoided.**

**Some of the Opposition are inclined to see these measures an adoption by the party of the Opposition point of view from which the chief danger seem to be the increasing economic power of the richer peasants. It is, however, not at all impossible that next year they will be disappointed to find that what they took for a policy was only an expedient adopted to meet a particular crisis. The majority are so confident that in the long run industrialism will solve all their problems that they are not inclined to be much afraid of the growth of rich peasants. I heard it confidently said in Moscow that this year's crisis in the grain collection was due to mistakes which you need not be repeated. And that presently the party will find itself able once more to leave the peasants more or less alone, to get as rich as they please, so long as they supply the agricultural produce which enables the Communist to push on with the program of industrialization, for the sake of which they are prepared to make as many compromises as may be necessary with individualist peasants or with anyone else.**



